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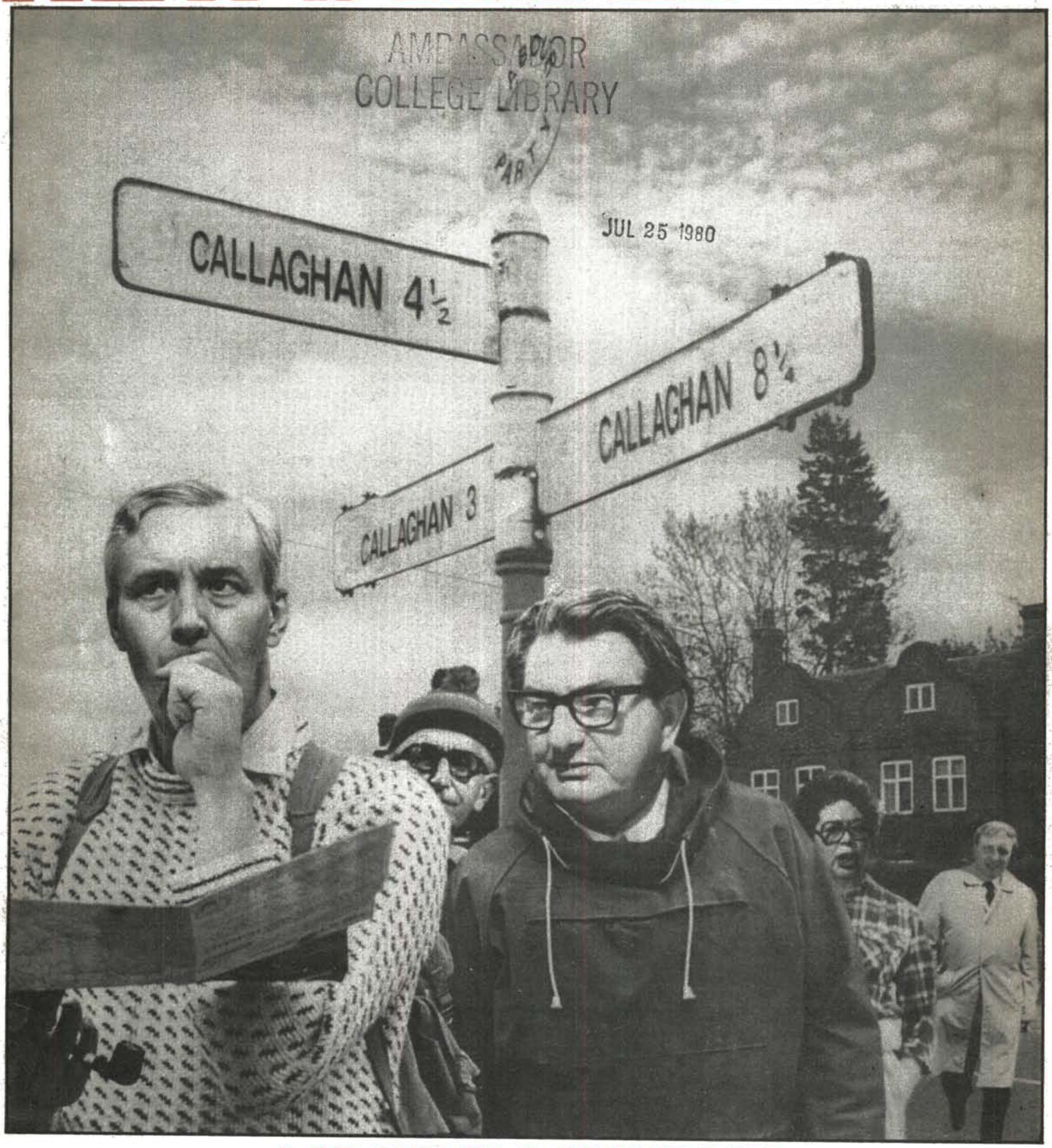
NEW STATESMAN



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LABOUR IN A QUANDARY
Which way is Left?

The church that cornered the cannabis market
Mr Haughey takes tea at Number 10
Prague police v Aristotle: the battle goes on

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NEW STATESMAN
Vol 99 30 May 1980 No 2567

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NOTES

US backed crack-down on Kwangju

Donald Kirk writes from Seoul: A convoy of some forty trucks and ten armoured cars staged what amounted to a show of force through the streets of the capital just as the paratroopers were preparing for their final assault on Kwangju. The lesson was clear: the martial law command will put down any signs of dissent with the same vicious force with which it knocked the rebels from the provincial capital building.

'Kwangju is a symbol of our protest', said a religious leader here, who was jailed several times under the regime of the late President Park Chung Hee. 'All the people are ready to protest against that kind of physical violence.' Beneath such heady words, though, the mood among dissidents is one of despair.

Not the least depressing aspect is the certainty that the United States, beneath all the talk about 'concern' for the 'process of democratisation' is obviously allied with the military 'strongman', Lieutenant General Chun Doo Hwan. 'There's a lot of anti-American feeling', said a Foreign missionary, 'the people are incensed by the release of troops.' He was referring, of course, to the decision of General John Wickham, Commander of all American and South Korean forces ranged along the 'demilitarized zone' between the two Koreas, to sign the order permitting the martial law command to transfer troops from the DMZ to fight against rebels in and around Kwangju.

'The Korean people have believed America is a friend of democratisation', said another leading religious figure here, 'but now the Americas are losing their identity as friends.' The irony was that the US could easily have lived up to the ideals pronounced in a vapid White House utterance of 'concern' over the expansion of martial law that first inspired the peaceful protest in Kwangju, then the first acts of brutality by paratroopers and, finally, the bloodshed. The White House could simply have refused all cooperation, even in the face of a minimal risk to 'security', until the generals agreed to rescind martial law and all the other trappings of military rule.

In the end, the likelihood is that the United States — and the Korean people — will pay a much higher price for the raw opportunism of American and South Korean leaders. It hardly seems possible now that students will take to the streets in mass protests, but their outrage is so deep that more violence appears inevitable. 'In the long term, they are going to protest', said one university professor. 'When the time comes, they will keep on struggling for democratisation.' He is not engaging in mere rhetoric. Pamphlets keep appearing anonymously denouncing martial law, even while soldiers guard all key buildings and riot police wait in buses amid daily rumours of demonstrations.

Receivership is Midlands' growth industry

Judith Cook writes: It used to be said that the great manufacturing areas of the Midlands were virtually immune from depression. The populations of Coventry and Leicester in particular had the highest wages of any city in the country.

The position is now rapidly changing. Unemployment figures in the wealthy West Midlands reached a post war record in the middle of this month with 143,500 out of work, i.e. 6.2 per cent of the population. The figure for the East Midlands is 84,500 (5.3 per cent). Taken all together the total is now 228,000 and soaring unabated towards the quarter million. Birmingham itself has 6.9 per cent unemployed, Coventry 6.9 per cent and Wolverhampton 7.5 per cent. A spokesman for Manpower services said there was nothing to suggest the underlying trend was going to moderate: 'Redundancy notifications continue to come in. I cannot see any room for comfort.'

Meanwhile electricity sales to industry, described by Geoffrey Shepherd, chairman of the Midlands Electricity Board as the 'barometer of the region's industrial health' have plummeted by £20 millions in just under a year. 'Our situation is worse than any other electricity board in the country', he said. A spokesman for the MEB said that this figure only represented a three per cent drop by industrial users but the situation was very serious: 'We just do not know how much worse it can get. We used to be the last electricity board to feel the crunch, because of the strength of local industry but now we seem to be the first.' He went on to say that the £20 million drop has come at a time when electricity was winning business from oil for industrial processes, 'so the trend is very disturbing indeed'.

The recent *Birmingham Post Economic Review* carried on its front page a heartening and stirring message for Sir Geoffrey Howe, explaining how well government policies were working. However, an inside page headline announced: 'Firms Crash at Record Rate'. Here it was reported that the biggest growth industry was receivership, some firms having to take on extra staff to cope. Receivers blamed high interest rates and the over-priced pound as being the main reason for so many businesses going into liquidation and all stressed that whatever might be said in the media there was not a single case where the workforce was to blame for a firm going under, although in some cases bad management had contributed to it.

Another big stink?

Oliver Martin writes: In 1855 the stench of London was so bad that the 'Stink Parliament' had to be dissolved. The appalling state of the Thames, plus a Royal death, compelled the government to invest in proper sewers. But the system built by Sir Joseph Bazalgette — the envy of the Victorian world — has now reached the end of its life expectancy of 100 years. Will it need another big stink before anything is done this time as well?

London's sewers are collapsing at the rate of nearly four a week. They are the responsibility of the Thames Water Authority which was created in 1974 and which inherited a backlog of problems and little money. Each collapse affects the tangled network of underground services: water mains, electricity, gas, telephone. A collapse in Petersham Road, Richmond, has taken more than a year to repair and cost £2m. And that doesn't include the cost to the community: traffic jams and diversions,

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ECONOMIC LONESOME?
RESTRAINT
MONETARISM
IT'S ALL KEYNES AND FRIEDMAN TO ME, NORMAN
MINE'S A HAIG OR A CHIVAS REGAL, IF YOU DONT MIND, NORA!

bankruptcies, and general inconvenience.

One unseen danger is seepage. Water enters cracked or damaged drains bringing with it earth and bricks, causing blockages inside and gaps outside. Untreated sewage leaks out, under London.

Financial shortages mean that the teams of 'flushers' — the men who go down the drains, inspect, repair and report damage — have been cut to half strength. The night shift is now called out only in an emergency so that the regular inspection of those sewars inaccessible during the day has stopped. Out of 12,000 employees, Thames Water has less than 100 'flushers' to look after the main sewers.

There are 13,500 miles of sewers in London, which is twice the length of the capital's roads. Each year 135 miles should be replaced just to maintain the status quo. The Authority's 1980-81 budget of £430 m. cannot meet this target. One typical London borough replaces a half mile of main drains a year when it should be replacing four miles. At that speed, it will take 800 years to renew the network.

Water rates paid by its 12 million customers are the sole source of income for the Authority. And despite the groans of the ratepayers, the Authority maintains that its service is still cheap. Spending on capital projects is consistent — £90 m. this year, £78 m. last — and consistently not enough.

The Department of the Environment adds nothing, but, in the event of a deficit, allows Thames Water to borrow money from the private sector at current lending rates. This money has to be repaid out of next year's budget. This year, the Authority's costs are 13 per cent over its budget and money will have to be borrowed to plug the hole.

Most of the sewers are actually maintained by local boroughs under agency agreements. The Authority agrees a schedule of work and hands over the money. Unexpected deterioration has to be dealt with on a strict rota with money begged out of the Authority's budget, and at the expense of the general replacement programme.

'Sus' cases for Europe

Jonathan Woodcock writes: Next week, 5 June, the House of Commons will debate the recommendation of the Select Committee on Home Affairs that the notorious 'sus' law should be abolished. If the Commons wishes to implement the recommendation, it can do so on 18 July, when John Fraser's Private Member's Bill to abolish 'sus' has its second reading. There is likely to be some vociferous lobbying to keep the law — which makes it an offence to be 'a suspected person loitering with intent to commit an arrestable offence' — not only from the police, but also from the House of Lords.

Failure to abolish it soon will almost certainly result in applications being made to the European Commission on Human Rights. The National Council for Civil Liberties already has more than a dozen cases in the pipeline, and plans to go ahead if Fraser's Bill falls and there is no sign of the government bringing in its own legislation to get rid of the law. 'Sus' is likely to fall foul of Article 5 of the European Convention, which enshrines the right to liberty, with strictly interpreted exceptions which must be 'prescribed by law'. In the *Sunday Times* thalidomide case, the European Court stated that 'a norm cannot be regarded as a "law" unless it is formulated with sufficient precision to enable the citizen to regulate his conduct'; the European Court and Commission have consistently found that laws which lack legal certainty or which are arbitrary are in breach of the Convention. There will also be a breach of Article 14 (requiring no discrimination) if it is shown that members of the black community have been subjected to special treatment which has no objective or reasonable justification.

In Ireland, the courts have held the 'sus' law to be unconstitutional, because it offends against the concept of justice and equality before the law. In the United States, too, it has been ruled unconstitutional for offending against the requirements of 'due process', because it fails to give adequate notice of the conduct to be avoided and punished. The New York Court of Appeals said of the US equivalent to 'sus' that it 'places virtually unfettered discretion in the hands of the police and thereby encourages arbitrary and discriminatory enforcement . . . Thus whether or not the suspect is hauled off to jail for suspicious loitering depends for all intents and purposes upon the whim of the policeman'.

Levin's own goal

Nick Anning writes: The annual conference of the Society of Civil & Public Servants (SCPS) held in Portsmouth last week, ran its course unruffled by the prior interference of *Times* columnist Bernard Levin. On 20 May, in an article entitled 'The Goal at Portsmouth', Levin waved the banner for civil service union 'moderates', whom he sees as the vital guarantee against the left's continuing control of the SCPS Executive Council. Levin reported that 'moderates' would be voting for a number of key agenda items on union election procedure. He also gave a list of 12 'moderate' candidates for election to the SCPS Executive Council for the coming year. Levin omitted to point out to his readers that several of the named candidates were sponsored by the same group of SCPS branches: the Lord Chancellor's Department Headquarters, the Department of Trade and Industry branch at Charles House, Kensington, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food London Headquarters and the Metropolitan Police civilian staff.

Harold Hall, a Principal with ACAS, Dorothy Harkin, a Senior Executive Officer at the Lord Chancellor's Department Headquarters, J. R. Bannister, Higher Executive Officer at the Department

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IRELAND
Mary Holland

There is one thing Mr Haughey may want in exchange for courting Mrs Thatcher

In return for the silver teapot

THE IRISH PREMIER Mr Charles Haughey, described his meeting last week with Mrs Thatcher as 'one of the friendliest and most open of my political career'. He also claimed to have found Mrs Thatcher an attentive and sympathetic listener. A rare enough tribute to the Prime Minister, this was rendered the more remarkable by the fact that she had left Mr Haughey to face a press conference of mainly Irish journalists with virtually nothing to show (at least in public) in return for his carefully chosen gift of a Georgian silver teapot — except the promise of further meetings and closer political cooperation between the two governments. The main planks of Mr Haughey's own party's policy on Northern Ireland — a demand for a British declaration of intent to withdraw or, failing that, the positive encouragement of progress towards Irish unity — were not even mentioned. On the contrary, the Irish Premier signed his name to a joint communique which, while repeating his own aim of unity by consent, also agreed with the British Prime Minister 'that any change in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland could only come about with the consent of the majority'. In other words it reaffirmed the British government's 'unconditional guarantee' to Northern Unionists, which for so long has been anathema to successive Dublin governments.

Watching Mr Haughey on television one could not help imagining the howls which would have greeted his predecessor Mr Jack Lynch if he had put his name to such a thing; the accusations of collaborating with the British. But then Mr Haughey, as one has had occasion to remark before in the *New Statesman*, has one immeasurable advantage over Mr Lynch. His supporters, in particular the Fianna Fail back-benchers who elected him as party leader, believe him to be a 'real republican' in a way they never did about Mr Lynch.

Irish journalists have never been any more eager than their colleagues in Britain to point out that the emperor has no clothes. On this occasion, though, it seems that Mr Haughey was much less concerned with public and political reaction at home, which he was confident he could handle, than with impressing Mrs Thatcher. His primary aim was to dispel decisively 'the whiff of sulphur' which has hung about his image ever since he stood trial for alleged involvement in the illegal importation of arms for the IRA in 1970. (The whole of political Dublin, incidentally, has been waiting for the publication of an epic article on this scandal in the monthly magazine *Magill,* which has been delayed by the threat of libel action from one of the main characters involved. It was originally scheduled to coincide with Mr Haughey's visit to London and its delay has almost certainly proved a welcome bonus for him.)

MR HAUGHEY knows that he has been viewed with intense mistrust, both in Britain and in Northern Ireland, as a militant republican, who won the leadership of his party mainly because of grass-roots discontent with Mr Lynch's moderate line on Northern Ireland. He also knows that the Northern Ireland Office has consistently advised Mrs Thatcher to have nothing to do with him, or if she absolutely had to meet him then to sup with a very long spoon.

The Blue and the Green; the Orange card has yet to be played

Press Association

In recent months there has been a brilliantly orchestrated campaign to kill off this popular British media image of the erstwhile gunrunner and replace it with that of the reasonable statesmanlike politician. The British army, for example, is forever expressing its public satisfaction at the greater co-operation on security matters since Mr Haughey came to power. British politicans who have met him are almost embarrassing in their eagerness to impress one with their discovery that he is a realistic and skilful politician. All this reached a crescendo in the editorials in the British quality press prior to Mr Haughey's arrival, which almost without exception urged Mrs Thatcher to welcome him as a friend and to be careful not to hurt his feelings. *The Times,* in a typical passage, described Mr Haughey as 'an ornament' to the profession he practised before entering politics — which just happened to be accountancy and likely to appeal to Mrs Thatcher.

If his main object is to convince Mrs Thatcher that he is a politician with whom she can talk real business in the future Mr Haughey appears to have played an adroit game. But Mrs Thatcher should also understand that the Irish Premier took some risks in making no public demands at this stage and in virtually accepting the British line on Northern Ireland. Although his command of the militant Republicans in his own party is almost complete, he cannot expect to keep them happy indefinitely with promises of solving the Northern Irish problem by much closer political co-operation between London and Dublin. Close co-operation with Britain and vague talk about some rearrangement of the British Isles on the lines of a 'Nordic union' is unlikely to strike many sympathetic chords in a party whose main tradition has been to break all links with Britain, and which in the past has held on to power with such slogans as 'burn everything British but their coal'.

Mr Haughey has embarked on a courtship of Mrs Thatcher but he is by nature a man who expects some returns for his courting. There is one thing which she could do for him, which would also make sound political sense at home. For some weeks now newspapers have been carrying leaks about the government's plan for a new devolved government in Northern Ireland which, it is said, will consist of a virtual return to majority rule, albeit with built-in safeguards for the Catholic minority. These leaks have come from the Northern Ireland Office whose civil servants favour the scheme. Mr Humphrey Atkins is also thought to be leaning towards it, if only because it will allow him to leave Northern Ireland with the air of having accomplished something there.

But politicans and senior civil servants who know the province must also know that such a plan would be totally unacceptable to the Catholic Social Democratic and Labour Party and could force them into the dangerous position of boycotting elections. Up to now there has been the hope that a cabinet Committee on Northern Ireland, with William Whitelaw in the chair, would veto the scheme. In normal times that might happen but at the moment everyone of real weight on the Committee has his political plate more than full, including Mr Whitelaw himself. In this situation there is a danger that the Atkins plan would slip by if only because no-one of sufficient clout in the Cabinet has the energy to block it.

That would cause grave problems for Mr Haughey. Although he has attempted to distance himself from any interim plan for Northern Ireland which is not seen to be leading to Irish unity, it would be politically impossible for him to give even his quiescent approval to any plan which was not acceptable to the SDLP. In an interview on Northern Irish television after his meeting with Mrs Thatcher he said that no initiative at all would be better than one which could not work. This is advice which Mrs Thatcher would do well to take seriously, at least if she hopes for continued co-operation from Mr Haughey. The instinct to do something about Northern Ireland is laudable, indeed the *New Statesman* has been to the fore in condemning the long years of government paralysis and apparent indifference. But what Northern Ireland cannot afford is another failure, not even to save Humphrey Atkins's pretty face.

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of the Environment and Owen Kelly, Principal at the Department of Employment, were each sponsored by this group of four branches, as was B. Willett, senior Executive Officer at the Department of Education & Science. T. Thomson, Higher Executive at the Department of Health & Social Security, had the support of three out of the four, while M. F. Williams, and HEO with Customs & Excise in East Anglia, was sponsored by the Lord Chancellor's Department alone from the four branches. G. J. Waggett was backed by his home branch — Department of Trade and Industry, Charles House, where he is an HEO. F. Whitehouse was sponsored by the Lord Chancellor's Department, as well as by his home branch at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Of the remaining three names on Levin's list one P. B. Taylor, an Executive Officer from the Ministry of Defence Earls Court branch, had no outside sponsorship, (though Charles House personnel apparently enjoy an arrangement which gives them access to the nearby canteen facilities of an otherwise highly secure MoD building ...). Of these twelve candidates, five were elected to the Executive Council for a second term (they were members last year). Three new members of the 21-strong council were elected, one of whom, Bob Hart of the Redder Tape group, doubled his last year's vote.

The total national SCPS membership is around 100,000; of that, the Metropolitan Police civilian staff amount to under 1 per cent (554 members) and the Lord Chancellor's Department Headquarters, with 136 members, accounts for 0.1 per cent. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food London Headquarters branch totals 760 members. Still more, of the 942 motions put to this year's conference, only two were proposed by the four branches supporting the 'moderate' slate: the Metropolitan police SCPS branch tabled items on the Olympic Games and on passenger allowances in motor vehicles. Is that what Levin had in mind by '... men and women who truly represent the views of the [SCPS] membership as a whole'?

Will Nujoma meet Shore?

Christopher Hitchens writes: A few weeks ago, London was graced with the presence of Gerrit Viljoen, the hated 'Aministrator-General' of South West Africa. Not only does Viljoen have the task of imposing South Africa's writ on the occupied territory of Namibia, but he also holds a leading position in the *Broederbond:* South Africa's ultra-right wing freemasonry.

The occupation of Namibia by South Africa has been declared illegal countless times by international law and by the United Nations. Viljoen's standing is thus approximately equivalent to that of an Afghan Foreign Office bureaucrat. Notwithstanding this, he was received by junior foreign minister Richard Luce, and paid a 'courtesy call' on Lord Carrington. He also met with Peter Shore, reputedly Labour's shadow foreign affairs spokesman, despite urgent and early requests from SWAPO to Shore. These simply reminded him of Labour's declared policy and asked him not to dignify Viljoen's propaganda mission.

This week the boot is on the other foot. Sam Nujoma, President of SWAPO, is paying an official visit to London. As the probable Mugabe in any foreseeable Namibian election, Nujoma will be received officially by Lord Carrington and treated as an important visitor by the Foreign Office. But will he have any time for Peter Shore? SWAPO sources in London say that he may, or there again that he may not.

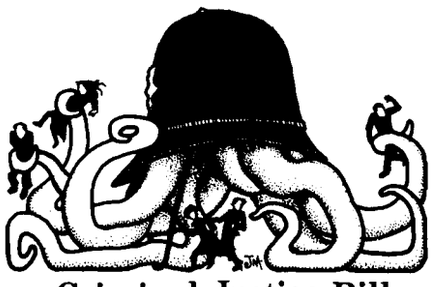
Another 'independent' government inquiry

David Pelly writes: The government announcement last week of the members 'and wide-ranging terms of reference' of an independent inquiry into the value of public sector inflation-proofed pensions probably ensures that the inquiry will conclude that the 5½ million workers who benefit from inflation-proofed schemes should be charged more for the 'privilege'. For who is to chair this inquiry? None other than Sir Bernard Scott, former Chairman of Lucas Industries — a company well-versed in depriving workers of their pension rights.

Every 2 years an independent Actuary reviews the Lucas Industries Staff Pension Fund to check that the projected income from its investments will meet its liabilities, the pensions of retired workers. If the Actuary estimates that this is not the case the Company is bound by the Trust Deed of the Pension Fund to make up the difference either by injecting a lump capital sum or by increasing their rate of contribution over a set number of years.

Such an evaluation took place at the end of 1975 and again in April 1978. At the latter review the Actuary informed the Board of Trustees that the surplus in the Fund amounted to £5m. This surprised the Trade Union Trustees on the Board who expected a much larger surplus given the size of the Fund and the increasing level of investment returns that took place over this period due to a general upturn in the economy. They therefore asked the Actuary for clarification.

The Actuary explained that in the 1975 Review he had assumed a rate of return on investment of 6 per cent which would have resulted in a deficit between liabilities and income. This in turn should have forced the company to put capital into the Fund to balance it out. However, instead 'he was persuaded by the Company to assume a rate (of return) of 6½ per cent which did create a balance.' Unfortunately, for the pensioners, the actual rate of return was much closer to the Actuary's original estimate of 6 per cent, than the Company's amended figure. So by 1978 the surplus stood at £5m, instead of the £50m which it would have been if the Company had contributed its due. In this way through collusion behind the back of the Trustees, who are legally responsible to the members of the Pension Scheme, Lucas Industries managed to avoid paying a large amount of money into the Fund. The surplus which could have been produced would have given Lucas Pensioners extra benefits at a time when their pensions are being ravaged by inflation. If that was not enough, the Company is using certain benefits of the new state pension scheme to try to *reduce* the annual 5 per cent increase pensioners were due to offset inflation which is currently running at 22 per cent.



Criminal Justice Bill

Should Scotland have an independent police complaints board? NORMAN BUCHAN continues his week-by-week report of the committee stage of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill.

ON THE SAME DAY that the Select Committee on Home Affairs proposed an end to the infamous 'Sus' law, the Scottish Standing Committee finally passed the clause giving powers of detention. Not that they are identical, of course, but in their consequences and likely use, they are certainly far too close for comfort.

True, the Government conceded on a number of technical details; notification of parents, time of commencement of detention, and the right to inform a solicitor (the right to *inform* was clarified, though not the right actually to *consult* a solicitor).

Our main argument last week was on the need to establish an independent police complaints board before these new powers were implemented. Our amendments were defeated but they led to a revealing debate. Unlike England there is in Scotland no independent element whatsoever in the handling of complaints against the police. This has been justified on the grounds that our independent system of prosecution (the Procurator Fiscal) contains sufficient safeguards. But, as Harry Ewing pointed out, the whole process must be triggered off by a senior police officer in the first place. *If* he decides that 'the complaint is a justifiable claim', and *if* it is breach of the law, then and only then, will it go to the Procurator Fiscal. But, of course, in most cases it is not a criminal charge against the police that is at issue, but a complaint about their procedure in handling people. The statistics published by the English Board show that over half the complaints against the police are under the heading of 'procedures', 'assault', and harrassment. With complaints about procedures being the largest.

We argued that it was therefore in the interests of the police themselves to have an independent board. New procedures were being established in both detention and search, and these were likely to be applied in situations which would exacerbate police and community relations. We argued too that this must be judged against an increasing opposition to the use of 'sus' powers elsewhere; working class kids (who were likely to be involved more often than most) would not be inclined to come forward if the whole complaints' procedure remained tightly under police control.

We quoted David Powis's book *The Signs of Crime* (described as a 'field manual' for police) on what we thought might be possible targets of police activity under the new law:

> ...extreme political views intended to harm the community you (the police) have sworn to protect. While there are subtle differences between these types of extremists and thiefs, it is difficult to put one's finger on material distinctions. However, they seem to have a motivation or dedication, whatever their appearance (they are usually scruffy and, occasionally, personally dirty) ... intense and extremist gabble, if spoken with a cultured voice particularly if the speaker is a woman ...

The debate was marked by two striking interventions. The first from the former Under Secretary, Harry Ewing, saying that an independent complaints board was justified on its own merits even without the problems caused by the new powers and that he himself had had a short Bill ready to do that in 1976. Secondly, the present Under Secretary, normally a bright and liberal man, produced an extraordinary statistical argument purporting to show that an independent board in England had had no effect on the actual numbers of cases either brought forward or substaintiated. This seemed to us rather wide of the point.

We won the argument and promptly lost the vote. It is really becoming quite serious to see how a nine-man Tory group, of whom six are Advocates (barristers), have solidly voted along the party line, despite pressures from (among other legal bodies) the Faculty of Advocates. As John Maxton muttered: 'We might at least have expected a bit more trades union solidarity from the Advocates'.

One bright note: having voted in a consistently reactionary fashion throughout the previous sessions, the Leader of the Scottish Nationalist Party on this occasion voted happily with us. His vote was, sadly, not enough. The clause was passed, detention was through, and battle was promptly engaged on the new powers of search in Clause Four of the Bill.

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Kathy Wilkes

Tomin's mouth has not been shut

An empty victory for the Secret Police

JULIUS TOMIN informed the police on 17 May that his Wednesday philosophy seminars had been suspended. His three-year struggle to maintain them had been justified by the real possibility that they could be successfully continued; when the police violence removed that possibility entirely, so too vanished the justification for continuing the fight. The philosophy seminars physically could not take place when, early in the afternoon of each Wednesday, Julius was detained in the police headquarters and students, turning up in the evening to find him missing, were themselves detained, held for 48 hours and often violently beaten-up whilst in custody. Concerned with the study of philosophy, and completely uninterested in an 'heroic' public image, Julius gave the best possible proof that his motivation is philosophical rather than political by discontinuing this particular method of teaching philosophy: the subject is for him too important to misuse in pointless heroics.

Now philosophy is still discussed; but in the Socratic fashion, while walking and talking together, rather than in the Academic form of regular lectures. The Socratic method is the most intensive that there is — as I discovered when a few days ago Julius and I discussed Aristotle throughout the day, and then moved on in the evening and the small hours to argue furiously about topics in the philosophy of mind. His students, who treat the Tomins' apartment as a second home, now get all the philosophy they want daily, instead of weekly.

This cannot be construed as a victory for the secret police, although no doubt they represent it to themselves as such. It is no victory, because the suspension of the Wednesday seminars is no suspension of Julius' philosophy; and above all, a 'security' force compelled to resort increasingly to brutal violence can claim no victory without admitting the shame of the paradox. Indeed, sometimes the police do not try to justify their assaults; one student, waiting in the Tomins' apartment for the police to cart them all off once again to the headquarters in Bartolomëjska for a 48-hour detention, asked one of the security officers why he came to break up, rather than join in, the discussions; after a pause the policeman replied: 'It is too late now'.

NEWTON-SMITH AND KENNY have already described in the *New Statesman* the dreary processes of detention, interrogation and deportation; since the predominant emotion of the detainee is boredom tinged with incredulity, there is no need to describe my own interrogation. What struck me most forcibly, though, were certain contrasts. Some of these were simple — the lean fitness of the students, compared with the obesity of the two secret policemen who sat either side of me in the back of their small unmarked car. Other contrasts were more interesting: on the one hand the attempts of those students who found English a struggle to express exactly what they believed and thought, on the other the attempts of the police interpreter, similarly struggling with English, to conceal just that. Again: on the one hand the ignorance of the police of Czechoslovak history — they misidentified a mounted statue of the Hussite commander Jan Zizka as one of Jan Hus himself — and on the other, the living knowledge of the students of their own history. More generally: the refusal of the police to let thought contaminate action, contrasted with the insistence of the students upon their inseparability.

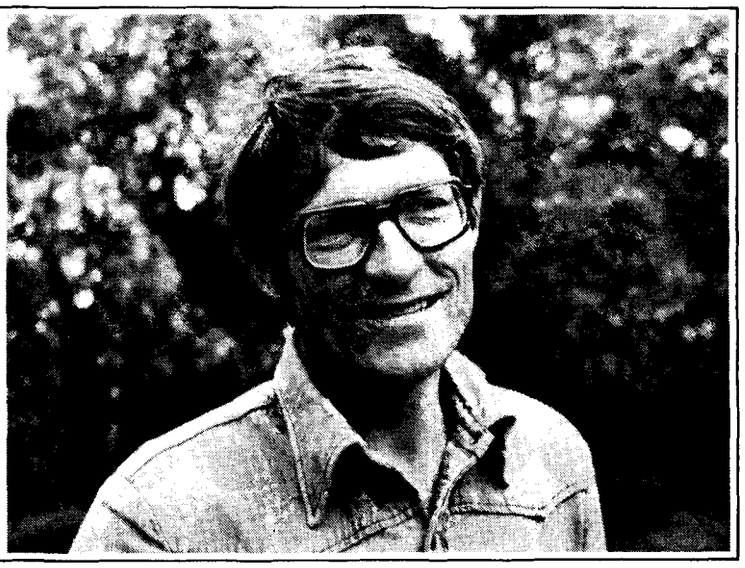
These contrasts became joyously evident at the airport, as the three secret police men and the interpreter tried to smuggle me in to the airport customs for an exhaustive search without the thronging foreign tourists noticing anything awry. The car drew up at the airport, and I was ordered to remain inside while the customs officials were briefed; whereupon three students, carrying roses, came to the car and walked with me to the terminal building, apparently oblivious of the muttered threats and orders of the policemen — two of them huge — and interpreter. The police feared the tourists at the airport; whereas the students, who could have been detained, interrogated and beaten-up by the police around me, behaved as though they were invisible. One of them had only just recovered from a brutal and savage beating by the police; another had earlier been committed by the police to two weeks in a psychiatric institution; the third had been expelled from college for attending Tomin's seminars.

During the exhaustive customs search conducted by the police and the customs officials, the three students stationed themselves in a gallery whence they could look down into the cubicle and observe the entire process — the removal of all my papers and the eventual return of some of them; the embarrassed attempts of the interpreter to prevent me from returning their waves and signals, especially when the airport announcer 'regretted to announce that flight BA 695 to London would be delayed'; and a (successful) tug-of-war over a personal letter I had been asked to deliver, which I thought they had no right to peruse.

It was possible to feel sorry for the police at the airport. They issued threats which they could not carry out: 'If you do not give us that letter you will miss the plane!' — when clearly they were more anxious to see me go than I was to leave. They gave orders they could not enforce: 'You must not go to the Tuzex!' (the duty-free shop) — when they could not afford to attract attention by physically preventing me entering the shop. They forgot that by law I was required to change my Czechoslovak currency, so had to escort me back into the main fall to do so; since they both mislaid my passport and than failed for a time to find the correct exchange-counter, I had more time to meet my friends — who had ignored the police orders to leave — than the police had intended.

I was in no danger from any of this; the police could not risk an incident involving a British citizen at the national airport. But the students, Czechoslovak citizens, risked plenty. Perhaps, indeed, they were detained and questioned after they had seen me off (the plane was delayed for an hour); yet this real possibility weighed not at all with them, any more than the same possibility had counted the previous day when, with many others, all three had attended the ceremony to scatter Frantisek Kriegel's ashes. (There again is the glaring contrast: on the one hand the police, so frightened of a dead man that they had prevented his friends from attending the cremation; on the other the students and dozens more, who attended this later ceremony, and who would not waste a thought upon what the living presence of armed security police might entail.)

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN the police and Tomin is one-sided, in that only the police are engaged in a battle. Julius has nothing against the police — it is impossible, he argued, to hate them since their power to detain, abuse and attack invariably fosters, rather than hinders, the activity of those against whom it is directed. Just because of the police violence, support for his activity inside and outside Czechoslovakia has swelled enormously. Within Prague, the attitudes of complete strangers who have heard, via the BBC World Service, Radio Free Europe or Voice of America, of Julius' activities and the police assaults, are a constant delight. Two Hungarians, speaking no Czech, recently visited his apartment; pointing to his ear one said 'BBC!'; and then pointing to the street



Julius Tomin

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and roaring with laughter, 'Police!'; and then both pumped Julius' hand, slapped him on the back, and went away. Another example: one evening we spent half an hour on the Vltava river with Julius' younger son Marek. Julius needed his identity card to hire the boat. The man who wrote down the details looked up in surprise: 'Tomin! Any time you want anything, Dr Tomin, let me know . . .' Over and over again — from attendants, taxi drivers, clerks — the story has been the same; the police are excellent press agents.

Outside Czechoslovakia the outrage of philosophers — from Canada to Senegal — has united an amazing diversity of people of every conceivable political and philosophical stance. Czechoslovak embassies in several countries have repeatedly been asked to explain the police action; so far no answer has come because, evidently, there can be no explanation given that the two United Nations Pacts — on Civil and Political, and on Economic, Social and Cultural, Rights — are legally valid in Czechoslovakia. An exhaustive search of the Czechoslovak constitution and penal code by the British Embassy in Prague has established that there is no law which Tomin, his students or visiting philosophers can be said to have broken. So the abuse by the police of their own constitution to suppress the study of Aristotle — last suppressed, in the thirteenth century, by the Church — ensures the support for Julius of philosophers internationally.

If Tomin's philosophy discussions had been set up to make a political point, this concern by Western philosophers could not exist. The fact that they are not politically motivated is something which, sadly, only other philosophers seem able to accept: neither the Western media nor the Czechoslovak police can believe that an evening spent discussing philosophy could be an end in itself. The most depressing feature of my return from Prague was to find British reporters asking just the same questions as the police interrogators, couched rather more kindly: 'Come on, you say you were there to discuss philosophy — but what were you doing *really*?'

Of course Tomin's activities are 'political'; in the context of Czechoslovakia, the police assertion that they are becomes self-fulfilling. But the truly 'political' feature of the philosophy discussions is that Tomin and the students are not controllable by the Security, and that is the unforgivable 'provocation'. External harassment — interrogations, detentions, abuse, threats, libellous articles in newspapers, blows and kicks — is useless when shrugged-off by the designated victims. Security gains real control only when it forces individuals to moderate their activities themselves by the thought of what the police *might* do. Tomin has suspended his Wednesday meeting not because of what the police *might* do, but rather because of certain knowledge of what they *will* do: that is, violently prevent the meetings from even beginning. It is bad and boring enough to have to cope with the actual harassment that did and will occur; it is for Julius unthinkable to waste time considering possible harassment — this would be to admit the police 'inside the head', to let them influence his thoughts and hence his actions, and to give them internal as well as external control. But when it lacks internal control, Security has failed in its aims; and to defeat Security in Czechoslovakia 1980 is deeply 'political'.

Some in Czechoslovakia do not agree with Julius's stance; they argue that the circumstances require caution, secrecy, a low profile, and thereby safety. It is not for anyone outside Prague today to adjudicate this very real dispute. The pragmatic arguments for caution are self-evident and strong. On the other side, though, it is difficult to overestimate the effect on the young people of Julius's open-admissions policy: anyone can come, no invitation needed, no questions asked. Moreover the insistence that where nothing illegal is being done there is nothing to hide must have a magnetic attraction in Czechoslovakia today, where the real iniquity of the Husak regime is to force people into insincerity: where it is dangerous to say what you think or to act in accordance with your beliefs.(Consider the East European joke: 'Yes, Mr Interrogator, I do have beliefs and opinions, but I assure you, I disagree with all of them.') Manifestly, the law allows for philosophy to be discussed freely and openly; to conceal the existence of philosophy discussions would be to split thought and action, by acting as though it *were* illegal, subversive, and anti-socialist. And once thought is split from action, the police have arrived where they want to be, 'inside the head'.

BUREAUCRACY
George Rosie

What have the Scottish Office got to hide?

MacLean and embarrassment

AN ASTONISHING NUMBER of official files are being withheld from public view for 100 years in the Scottish Record Office. The civil servants in the Scottish Office seem to have lowered the wraps on almost every sensitive area of modern Scottish history from the big coalfield strikes of the 1880s, through the 'Irish disturbances' in Glasgow in the 1920s, the General Strike of 1926, 'disturbances' by the unemployed in the 1930s, right up to small-scale landgrabs by crofters in the Highlands in the late 1940s.

Because the 1958 and 1967 Public Records Acts — which introduced the 50-year and then the 30-year rules for opening government files — do not apply in Scotland, it is left to the civil servants to decide which official records the public can and cannot see. As John Imrie, Keeper of the Records, says: 'The closure periods are decided by the Scottish Office before the files come across to us.' The Scottish Office says that their 'general criteria' on closures are the same as those applied in England: 'National security; whether the contents might cause embarrassment to someone or their immediate family and whether it concerns an active issue in government or public service.' It is very hard to see how some of the closed files fall into any of these categories.

The Scottish Office say that researchers are 'encouraged' to apply for access to closed files, and that 95 per cent of the requests received are granted, but researchers point out that the process can be lengthy and cumbersome, and involves signing the Official Secrets Act and then submitting any manuscript to the Scottish Office for vetting (where it is likely to be purged of the names of any officials). Prising a file loose from the Scottish Record Office can be a lengthy business. In July 1977, Jerry Rubin, a lecturer in law at Kent University, asked to see the series of prison records on the Scottish revolutionary John MacLean (who always claimed that he had been drugged in Scottish jails). In December, four months after he made the request, Rubin was firmly told that access to the MacLean files could cause 'embarrassment to a living person' and that as the Public Records Acts did not apply in Scotland, 'the question of whether or not to allow access to records in Scotland is entirely a matter for the Department concerned.'

As Rubin's experience suggests, the files on political control and surveillance in the Scottish Office are guarded with zeal. The Scottish nationalist movement have always been convinced that, following the police and MI5 raids on them in the 1940's, they have been subjected to police harassment, intimidation, telephone tapping, and infiltration by police undercover agents. And, according to the SRO's Index Volumes, file no 557 in the Home and Health series contains details of 'police action against Scottish nationalist organisations' complete with 'reports by various police forces' and information on 'postal and telegraph censorship.'

The Scottish Office are also touchy about how the apparatus of the state has coped with industrial disputes in Scotland. There are 100-year closures on the files dealing with the Blantyre miners' strike in 1887, for instance, where the entry in the Index Volumes notes 'military aid to the civil power' and 'the stationing of cavalry and artillery in Lanarkshire'. Everything to do with the General Strike of 1926 in Scotland has been put under 100-year closure, and the 100-year rule has been applied to the dozens of files on 'demonstrations and disturbances by the unemployed' in the 1930's.

Some of the closures seem simply daft. It is very hard to see why, for instance, the details of the Dundee tailors' strike of 1894 is still a secret. Or why the Scottish Office feel it necessary to protect us from the implications of the Perth printers' strike of 1900. Just what was so subversive about the 'disturbances' on the quayside at Stornoway (of all places) over the landing of 'Swedish machine-made barrels' in 1893! And what did happen during the Brechin carters' strike of 1901 that qualified the event for a 100-year closure? Apparently we cannot be trusted with such strong stuff.

Other closures, however, look suspiciously like attempts by Scottish Office officials to cover up injustices. For example, in the Home & Health series file no 114 (dated 1906) is about 'prisoners wrongly libelled' (i.e. charged) who had their sentences reduced. File no 113 (dated 1904) has the details of one Matthew Barber who, apparently, languished in jail after his fine had been paid. And file no 104 (dated 1904) has all the papers on the 'illegal imprisonment' for *eight years* of two juvenile offenders, William Strang and John MacLachlan. For details as to why the unfortunate Strang and MacLachlan were 'illegally' jailed, and who was responsible, we must wait until the year 2004.

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The Left begins to slip

The Labour Party meets this weekend. Are the Left losing some of the initiative? PATRICK WINTOUR reports.

AFTER THE ROUT of the Callaghan government and the end of his 'special relationship' with the unions, many people expected that Labour's left-wingers would carry all before them. After all, that was what had always happened when Labour went into opposition, and the Party is nothing if not traditionalist. But this year things have been different, largely because so much is at stake. The Left have not been indulging in their usual rhetorical binge (which right-wing former Ministers are happy to let pass while they write their memoirs and prepare to hold office again). Instead, they have been continuing their campaign to change the Party's structure 'fundamentally and irreversibly' and the Right has had to mount a prompt counter-attack.

Unlike the last spell of Left-led opposition in 1970-73, the unions are now threatened with declining membership and shaky finance: they have therefore been taking a close interest in the Party's organisation. They have inundated the three panels of Labour's Commission of Inquiry (which are looking into membership, finance and political education) with detailed evidence on such esoteric topics as the Hastings Agreement on election expenses, the percentage of levy-paying members affiliated to the Party, and the structure of Labour's head office. The three panels will finish their work by mid-June, in time for the full Commission's weekend retreat into rural contemplation — at an ASTMS college appropriately situated near two hamlets called Chatters End and Maggots End. At this point the real battle will begin, over the three major constitutional issues: reselection of MPs, the drafting of the Party's manifesto and the election of the leader.

There has been so little controversy on the Commission so far that members have no idea what procedures will come into play when they find themselves in serious disagreement. The Left are likely to argue that the constitutional issues were settled at the Party conference last year, and should not be opened to question again. But the Left seem to be losing the initiative. Having won vote after vote last autumn over the composition of the Commission, they eventually lost at a critical point: their failure to get a replacement for left-winger Alex Kitson meant they did not achieve the political balance they needed. They are now extremely vulnerable if one or two votes switch sides.

Jim Callaghan (back from China with his abacus, as one Commission member put it) is eagerly totting up the votes. All the constituency representatives on the Commission — Benn, Heffer, Allaun, Richardson, Lestor — will elude him, as will Treasurer Atkinson; but the five trade unionists — Basnett, Jenkins, Duffy, Keys and Evans — could be his, making a majority with deputy leader Michael Foot. That is not to say the going will be easy for Callaghan. Moss Evans has made a dogged point of listening to his union's left-wing executive. Bill Keys of Sogat has hinted that he is not entirely in Basnett's pocket: 'We trade unionists are not all of one-mind'. And Foot regards the current preoccupation with constitutional issues as a 'dangerous boomerang' worth avoiding — an attitude the Left will find particularly helpful when their own Achilles heel is exposed in discussions over the structure of the National Executive Committee. (The Right have been campaigning to make this a fourth major constitutional issue, but Foot's distaste for such matters may well thwart them. For their part, the Left point out that few of Labour's regional conferences have asked for the NEC to be changed.)

At the June meeting of the Commission, David Basnett of the GMWU and Clive Jenkins of ASTMS will propose a new constitutional device — a National Council of Labour. If adopted, this would write the Party's manifesto and 'confirm' the Parliamentary Labour Party's choice of leader and deputy leader. Unlike the 500-strong electoral college proposed by the Left (and which many thought Basnett would support), the Council would have only 61 members. It would thus leave the PLP effectively in control of the choice of leader, and would downgrade the status of the NEC.

The proposal has been constructed with great tactical finesse by Basnett and he is sure to wage a concerted campaign to present it as a reasonable compromise between the PLP and the National Executive. His union has even said that if the Council idea were accepted, it would be willing to see a reduction of union votes at Party conferences.

The Left obviously don't like the idea of a Council, but they can guess at the consequences of alienating Basnett. He would align his block vote with other more right-wing unions to force through changes in the NEC that would emasculate the Left. Already he has warned that 'if the Council proposal is not pursued, we would argue strongly for direct representation on the NEC of the PLP and local government representatives'. The right-led clerical workers' union, APEX, has not yet tabled its resolution for this year's Labour Party conference, but it may be about restructuring the NEC.

THE MATHEMATICS of conference voting are particularly complicated this year. The 927,000-strong vote of the AUEW has swung to the Right, but the union will be sending a left-wing delegation to the conference. The delegates will undoubtedly indulge in their usual power-struggle with the right-wing executive, although their hands will be tied to a certain extent by the fact that the union's policy-making national committee has come out clearly on the side of the Right on the three constitutional issues.

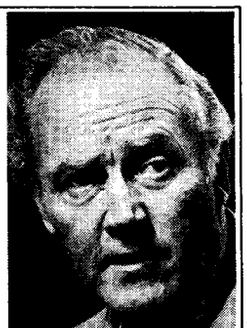
The swing to the Right is doubly damaging this year, as it coincides with the AUEW's five-yearly rules revision committee, whose members are the same as those on the national committee. A series of new rule changes will centralise power in favour of the right-wing executive: in particular, next year's delegations to the Labour Party conference and the TUC will be elected by the union's divisional committees, rather than by branch ballots as before; and where there is doubt about union policy, the executive rather than the delegation will decide which way to vote.

All things considered, the AUEW looks like remaining right-wing for some years now. Together with APEX, the post office engineers, the electricians, and the post, railway and steel workers, it will form a solid pro-Callaghan faction with a total of 1.8 million votes. If these are joined by the miners (240,000), ASTMS (170,000) and the GMWU (640,000), the Right will command something very near to an overall majority of the 6.25 million votes at conference.

The Left's position is not altogether lost. For example, the NUR now favours mandatory reselection of MPs, and one way or another the Left should carry the day on this issue. COHSE, the Health Service workers' union, has increased its affiliation to the Party by 100,000 in the last three years and may vote with the Left. The shop workers' union USDAW, a traditionally right-wing organisation with 350,000 votes, is moving leftwards. And the Transport and General Workers' Union has added 270,000 to its Labour Party vote over the last four years. In all, with NUPE, UCATT and the agricultural workers' union, the Left can muster 1.8 million votes. But without support from the Basnett-Jenkins axis at conference, they should lose on most issues.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE LEFT are not purely mathematical. Many of the issues which are currently preoccupying the party have been raised by the Right — a sure sign that the Left are losing momentum. Militant's hold over Labour's youth is one example. The structure of the NEC is another — and on this the Left have failed to provide either a coherent defence or a viable alternative. The chronic state of the party's finances under left-wing Treasurer Norman Atkinson has provided another stick with which to beat the Left; and the chaotic condition of the Party's organisation under the chairmanship of Eric Heffer yet another.

There is also something cramped and defensive about the Left's attitude at the moment. Only after considerable persuasion by the research department could the NEC bring itself to examine the holes in its policy on inflation, the pound and financial institutions. To have no view on inflation, even as a symptom of conflict over income distribution, is like claiming to have completed a jig-saw puzzle when some of the major pieces are still missing. Elsewhere on the Left, outside the NEC, there is the usual social and literary round: a forthcoming national Tribune



David Basnett's GMWU holds the pivotal position.

Chris Davies

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Chris Davies

The return of Sunny Jim

conference; two pamphlets on the alternative economic strategy (from the Labour Co-ordinating Committee and the London Conference of Socialist Economists); a conference organised by the Institute of Workers' control; and a 25,000-word pamphlet on Party structure compiled by a working party of leading left-wingers over the past two years. But where the Commission of Inquiry is concerned, the Left have been treading very cautiously indeed. For example, the Parliamentary Labour Party has so far remained untouched while the Commission has mulled over every other aspect of the Party's structure. The Left have steered clear of the question of union block voting. And in its evidence to the Commission the Tribune Group refused to make even a passing reference to the possibility of increasing the (potentially left-wing) constituency vote at conference. The Commission's minutes indicate that it will propose that Trade Unions for a Labour Victory (Basnett's crew) should decide on the future of the block vote.

The lack of coherence in the Commission's work has been caused — at least partly — by the speed with which it has been expected to produce results. The Left want a report ready for this year's Party conference, before the engineers' votes are irredeemably lost. But this has meant that some important decisions have been rushed through at a hectic, unconsidered pace. A recommendation to add a constituency member to the union-staffed Conference Arrangements Committee was accepted after 15 seconds. And when a number of proposals were put forward by Head Office staff, it was decided that these 'should be examined by the panel's secretary and accepted if they accorded with the panel's general approach'.

Many crucial decisions have been made — particularly by the finance panel, which has recommended that the 1980 conference be asked to accept state aid and that such a commitment should be included in the party's manifesto. It is proposed that for every vote won at a general election, a party should receive 10p from the state, while the chief opposition party should receive £500,000 a year. In the meantime, unions are to increase their national affiliation fees from 32p to 50p per member. The inquiry realises some unions cannot afford this but it should raise income from unions to £3.1 million in 1982. Unions will also be asked to increase their branch affiliations to local constituencies. A Commission survey has unearthed staggering discrepancies in these local affiliations: the NUR has 99 per cent of its branches affiliated to Constituency Labour Parties; the GMWU 52 per cent; the T&G 33 per cent; NUPE 33 per cent; the ISTC 27 per cent; ASTMS 25 per cent; and the agricultural workers' union three per cent.

By 1982, each CLP will be expected to have a minimum affiliation fee of £500 — i.e. 200 members at £2.50 a head. The finance panel will recommend that thereafter fees should be index linked. Forty new regional officials are to be appointed to help the CLPs submit regular accounts — at a probable cost of some £700,000 a year. It is estimated that by 1982 the Party will still be accumulating a deficit of about £200,000 a year — with no reserves. Its only hope of financial salvation will be to increase individual membership to more than 500 per constituency (from a current estimate of 400). To this end, it is recommended that workplace branches be set up wherever the CLP and NEC agree that it is appropriate. Each CLP is to submit accounts to regional office and a Director of Finance is to be appointed for Head Office.

The commission's political education panel has come up with some proposals for increasing Party membership — but most miss the point. Such measures as setting up a joint union-Party publishing house, increasing political education at union colleges, and inserting Labour party advertisements in union journals are all very well; but they will not give individuals any extra *reasons* for joining the Party. What is the point if members are not sufficiently involved in decision-making?

If there is one thing that unites right-wing union leaders with the Head Office staff who service NEC committees, it is their criticism of the Party's decision-making machinery. Sid Weighell of the NUR, himself a former Party agent, describes it as the worst of all possible worlds. Staff of the Research and International Departments have submitted a paper to the Commission arguing for more representative NEC sub-committees and for an overhaul of the procedure for compositing conference motions, to encourage rather than stifle debate. The NEC has already agreed belatedly that when a policy debate is embarked upon, a consultation document will be published and submissions invited from Party members, with special policy conferences later. It is one of the first signs that the Left on the NEC is aware of the urgent need to involve members in decision-making.

Unless the members understand and are committed to Party policy, it will be all too easy for civil servants to chip away at radical measures for reform, until they become unrecognisable. In the 1960s, the Labour government's planning agreement and other key aspects of its industrial policy were snuffed out not only because the party's leaders and the civil service were committed to capitalism, but also because too few Party members cared what happened. The Left had done next to nothing to mobilise shopfloor support for their policies.

Currently, a trade union inquiry is being held into state intervention in industry under Labour. Four trades councils in areas heavily affected by the NEB — Merseyside, Coventry, North Tyneside and Newcastle — have collected evidence from shop stewards in plants such as Chrysler, Speke, Tress, Alfred Herbert and Vickers. They have also interviewed some of those responsible for the government's policies, including Stuart Holland and Eric Heffer. (Sir Leslie Murphy, chairman of the NEB, and Eric Varley, former Industry Minister, have refused to attend the hearings.) The final report is not yet complete, but according to the President of Coventry trades council, one of its main conclusions is that the NEC failed to involve shop stewards in preparing policies and, as a result, did not get their whole-hearted support in carrying the policies through. (Sadly, the TUC has written to Newcastle trades council, asking that the inquiry be stopped, as it cuts across the lines of official union organisation: this contrasts curiously with current efforts such as the TUC South East Regional Council's to encourage trades councils to become more political.)

CLEARLY, THE LABOUR PARTY needs to learn from those who are trying to link the community with industry and politics. And there are some encouraging developments at a local level. A network of trade union resource centres, providing specialist help to trade unionists, has been set up, covering seven towns and reseembling the first crop of neighbourhood law centres. The most fully developed is the Coventry workshop, which has been carrying out research for the inquiry into state intervention. Three quarters of all manufacturing jobs in Coventry are controlled by 14 firms, so the bulk of the work has been with shop floor representatives in these.

With Talbot shop stewards, the workshop has conducted an inquiry into the motor industry and helped develop shop floor contacts with Peugot, Citroen and Talbot workers in Europe. During the recent 14-week strike at Talbot's Stoke plant, a union representative from the Madrid Talbot plant was in contact twice a week, keeping in touch with the progress of the strike. The workshop has also conducted a two-year inquiry into the collapse of the machine tool industry and is convening a national conference on the subject later this year. It has worked closely with stewards at GEC and Massey Ferguson, most recently on the impact of new technology. Experts from the United Autoworkers of America have been invited over to explain to stewards the effects of robotics and numerically controlled machines.

The work of the trade union resource centres is focussed on the need for education and understanding of industry, as a precondition of control. The Coventry workshop has suggested that the local authority should disseminate information through a monthly bulletin, monitoring the financial and employ-

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ment policies of the 14 firms that dominate the city's economy. It has suggested, too, that the local authority should provide shop stewards committees with accountants, planners and lawyers, to help them save jobs.

After all the high politics of the past three years and the more recent in-fighting over the constitution, the Labour Party will have to concentrate on the painstaking task of building a socialist consciousness at community and shopfloor levels. For the first time — with more thanks to the unions than to the Left on the NEC — the Party can look forward to being better funded, better organised and more open in its policy making. It will need to make full use of the new Party machine and (with luck) the new accountability of MPs through mandatory reselection, to rebuild a committed membership. Unless it does so, its policies will continue to fail, no matter how carefully they are formulated.

UNITED STATES
Claudia Wright

Race riots are bad for Carter but good for Bebe Rebozo

Death in Miami

DEATH IS one of the least well diagnosed conditions in the records of American city coroners. Pathologists don't agree on the circumstances of death, and autopsy examiners typically depend on police accounts of how, when, and where the body on the slab succumbed. Quincy, the television coroner whose eye for detail and whose penchant for personal investigation are heroically free of bureaucratic limitations and Police Department pressure, doesn't (and couldn't) exist in most cities here.

For this reason it may be possible for a sophisticated group of constitutional lawyers from Washington to prove in federal court that a group of four white Miami policemen deprived Arthur McDuffie, a young black businessman, of his civil rights, but it is virtually impossible for a local prosecutor, court and jury to convict them of murder by beating McDuffie to death with their sticks. Police murder, in a country whose laws generally permit the use of deadly force to arrest anyone the police may reasonably suspect of committing a felony, *any* felony, is usually committed without the witnesses or the corroborating evidence needed to produce a conviction. Thus, what the black community of Miami knew with certainty was murder in the McDuffie case was bound to lead to acquittal, as it did two weeks ago, precipitating the worst urban rioting in more than a decade.

Miami is in something of a predicament. Across Biscayne Bay a major source of the city's prosperity, the hotel strip of Miami Beach, has been unscathed by the violence. In the business centre of town, which is the headquarters for American multinational companies as well as American and European banks operating in Central and South America, there was only a brief interruption of bus and garbage removal services.

The anti-Castro Cuban community, which has been cock-a-hoop over the developments in Havana leading to the inflow of 67,000 refugees in the past month, is now deeply worried that the rioting will force the Carter administration to close the door — or (just as bad from their point of view) allow Haitian refugees the same status as the arriving Cubans. At the moment, the government continues to deport the Haitians on the ground that they leave Haiti for 'economic' not 'political' reasons. Miami's blacks say they are particularly bitter at this discrimination.

It would probably suit the city authorities to fix the blame for the riot on the McDuffie case, and on the past record of police brutality in Miami and the surrounding Dade County. A city police reporter lists several cases which have caused black criticism: a trooper from the Florida Highway Patrol was accused of raping a twelve-year old black girl last year but avoided conviction and prison; a young black man was shot in the back by city police who have not been formally charged with wrongdoing; a black schoolteacher's house was invaded by Dade County police searching for a drug suspect, and the family were beaten and terrorised before the police discovered they were in the wrong house. This last incident forced the removal of E. Wilson Purdy, whom criminologists elsewhere describe as one of the most liberal of American police chiefs, but whose policy as Dade County's public safety director was to fire policemen involved in racial incidents, and to cover up the details and avoid indictments. In the McDuffie case, which a medical examiner testified involved the worst head injuries he had ever seen, there are widespread reports that the police were operating a points-score system for the violence officers mete out to suspects: the beating of McDuffie allegedly rated a Department score of 29 out of 30.

IF MIAMI'S record for police brutality is now widely exposed, it hardly stands alone. Nationally, the death rate from police homicide for black males over ten years of age is nearly ten times higher than the rate for white males, and even in relation to arrests (which blacks endure disproportionately), the rate of police killings has been twice as high for blacks as for whites. Other cities with considerable police reputations for execution before trial include Los Angeles, Houston and Memphis. In 1977, an Appeal Court upheld a Tennessee statute under which the city police shot and killed a 16-year old burglary suspect fleeing from a hardware store. The Court claimed that the statute embodied English common law 'which has been enforced for centuries and has been universally recognised' (the court failed to observe that English practice was changed some time ago). Pushing aside the constitutional protections, the court asserted that the state had a clear interest 'to protect their own citizens against felons'. The Supreme Court refused to disturb the ruling. Even in states which have legislated to revise the old common law precedent for use of deadly force, few police can remember which conditions permit force and which do not.

Just as lethal as the vagueness of the law and the broad discretion of the officer are the training practices of many Police Departments. A new analysis of police killings in Los Angeles, which will be released this week, blames high casualties on the zeal with which patrolmen are instructed to empty all chambers of their revolvers as they blaze away.

In Miami's case, putting the blame for the riot on the police shifts the public focus, and also the remedies, away from the underlying racism and economic discrimination that infects this outpost of Hispanic fascism. For the grey eminences of real estate speculation in the city — who remembers Bebe Rebozo, the Biscayne banker and Nixon's fishing companion? — there may even be a dividend in the massive destruction of the Northern section of the city, particularly if, as is likely, its former black residents leave and the federal government pumps substantial new community development money into the area. For a city that has one of the highest rates of condominium construction and conversion in the country, and a substantial shortage of land for new luxury apartments, the riot may have achieved what a policy of longtime neglect and discrimination could not — the eviction of blacks from the central city, and their replacement by well-off white retirees from the North, investment managers for Anastasio Somoza and his friends, and vacationers from the jumpy ruling classes of Venezuela, Columbia, Argentina and Chile, served at their tables by pliant Cubans who have clambered ashore in hopes of becoming millionaires.

Statistically, Miami is one of the most prosperous cities in the United States, with a growing number of jobs, tourists, investors and rising per capita income that has been resistant to the recession effects elsewhere in the country. Blacks constitute about a quarter of the city's population, Hispanics approximately half. The city also has one of the largest concentrations of urban poverty, exceeded only by New Orleans and one or two others. Black unemployment rates are double those of Hispanics, and compared to Northern urban ghettoes the city government provides only a fraction of the health and welfare services needed by out-of-work families.

Newspaper advertising for job vacancies requires bilingual skills for the most menial of jobs, circumventing legal restrictions about discriminatory hiring. Cubans underbid blacks for most kinds of work, and fears of further economic displacement heightened tension in Miami as soon as the recent Cuban inflow began. Former ambassador Andrew Young, whom the mayor of Miami asked to visit early in the riot week, describes districts of the city 'deliberately organised to exclude blacks. Blacks don't have direct representation in local government or the judicial system, and have much less importance in government in Miami than they have in a lot of other cities.'

Having a race riot on his hands compounds the President's political woes, since Carter cannot hope to survive without substantial black electoral support. In the January primary in Florida, for instance, black voters, most of them in Miami, gave the President nearly 70 per cent of their votes. Four months later, black voters in the District of Columbia primary swung in the opposite direction, delivering a two-thirds majority to Kennedy. This recent result marks a serious erosion of Carter's support among blacks, and the way in which he will handle the Miami affair carries the risk of deepening black alienation. He can't afford to anatagonise the Hispanics either: Florida is one state Carter must win.

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The ASA is an independent body. Although it is financed by the advertising industry (who are, incidentally, as interested as is the consumer in banning unacceptable advertising), it works independently of the industry. It has to be independent to be fair and unbiased about consumers' complaints.

For this reason, the Chairman is independent and so are the majority of the Council members. For instance, in the last year we have had a consumerist, a Methodist Minister and a Member of the House of Lords on the Council.

Under the Council's supervision, a full-time secretariat works to make sure that the Code is being adhered to by the advertising industry. And that decisions made by the ASA are being enforced.

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Does the ASA keep up with changing attitudes in society?

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Church corners cannabis market

The future of the Jamaican economy may be bound up with the fortunes of an obscure religious sect of right-wing political views, which is already a major business on the island, and is currently facing charges in America of smuggling over 100 tons of cannabis. TIM MALYON of the UK Legalise Cannabis Campaign has just returned from a visit to Jamaica.

JAMAICA IS FACING desperate economic problems which are in turn leading to escalating unemployment and social unrest, and increasing pressure for an early general election. Prime Minister Michael Manley's ruling People's National Party has refused further aid from the International Monetary Fund because of impossible cuts demanded in government spending by the Fund's bankers. So far the search for alternative remedies has been in vain but Manley might be reconsidering a remark he made in 1978 about alternative ways of earning foreign exchange.

> The question of legitimate marijuana exposes me to extreme temptation. As you know, Jamaica has a balance of payments crisis and we have never been able to get the marijuana sales to pass through our bank.

Although the Jamaican authorities have been making efforts to reduce both the sale and export of marijuana, this April the *Financial Times* reported that 'a growing body of Jamaican opinion' supported moves to legalise marijuana as the annual trade was estimated to be worth $200 million — roughly the same as the latest reported net deficit in the island's foreign reserves.

Jamaica is now undoubtedly a major world exporter of herbal cannabis. According to UN figures, 8,661,540 plants were uprooted on the island in 1978, 72 per cent total world plant seizures. Although colonially-imposed taboos against cannabis are breaking down rapidly, and increasing numbers of the middle class are using the herb, usage remains most common among the working classes. 'Given the extent of non-smoking uses, one could estimate with considerable confidence that some 60 to 70 per cent of the lower section of the rural population, men, women and children, inhale, ingest or use ganja in some form — *undoubtedly one of the highest rate of* marijuana use for any population in the Western world.' (Vera Rubin and Lambroe Comitas, *Ganja in Jamaica).* This same US government sponsored study reported that over 25 per cent of households in one of the island's communities, itself 'not a particularly large producer of ganja,' were openly known to be cultivating. With the exception of a few larger cultivators who were selling to the urban areas, the majority of cultivators came from the poorest levels of society.

For many people on the island, and in particular members of the Rasta movement, cannabis has an immense spiritual and symbolic significance, a significance where politics, economics and religion have become inextricably entangled during the island's struggle against political and cultural oppression. Jabulani Tafari, a leading Rastafarian, explained: 'We are calling for a spiritual, internal revolution. We see herb now as part of that process, and Rasta being one of the principal agents in this movement.'

The extent to which marijuana has been absorbed into the mainstream of Jamaican culture is suggested by this remark from the Senior Medical Officer of Jamaica's largest psychiatric hospital, Dr Freddy Hickling, who is a supporter of the Rasta movement and advocate of a legal cannabis trade:

> 'Herb is for the healing of the nations', the Rastaman says, 'herb is for the healing of the nations'. Let us deal with the reality of what we are about. And the realities are Babylon, the international capitalist system, which has held us down for 400 years — that is what we about. Ganja is a sacred and holy element in this phenomenon.

Despite certain apparent similarities — such as its attitude to marijuana — the Ethiopian Zion Coptic Church is not part of the Rastafarian movement. Recently the church — which has substantial land and business interests in Jamaica — was indicted by a US Federal Grand Jury on charges involing conspiracy to import and traffic in marijuana — at least 15 tons. It is currently involved in an attempt to overthrow the whole US machinery of marijuana prohibition in its fight against the charges.

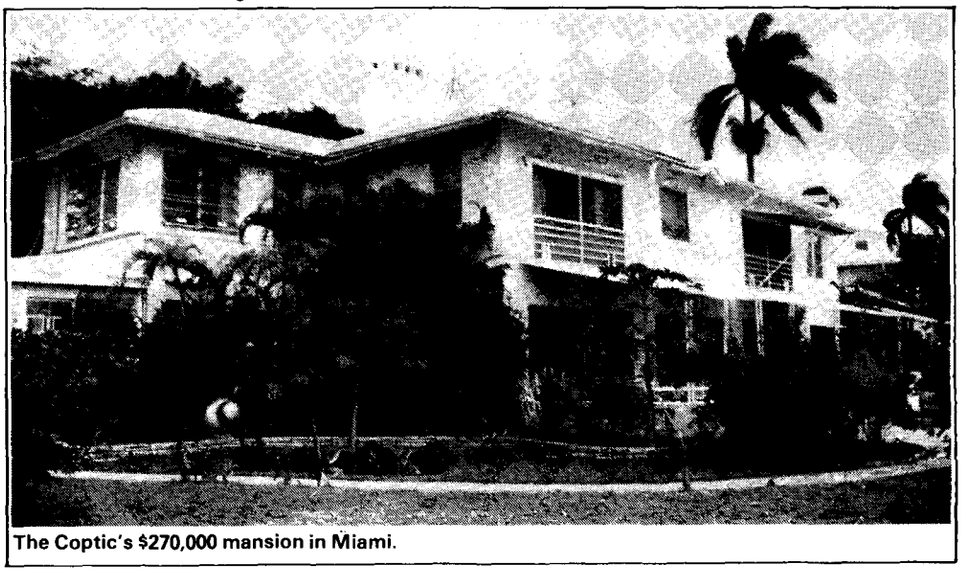
The Ethiopian Zion Coptic Church has already been accepted by the US courts as a religion, as has their use of marijuana as an essential sacrament. Building on the right guaranteed in the US Constitution's First Amendment to free exercise of religion (a right which the Native American Church enjoys today in its use of peyote) the Coptics' leading lawyer, former Attorney General and Presidential envoy to Iran, Ramsey Clark, is pushing to have all charges dismissed as unconstitutional. He is also presenting evidence to show that there is no rational basis for the present classification of marijuana as a dangerous substance with no medical uses. He hopes thereby to show that 'the statutes under which the defendant is charged are unconstitutional in that they are arbitrary and irrational and therefore deny the defendant due process of law and equal protection of the laws, in violation of the 5th amendment.'

For four days last month, a somewhat bemused judge listened to a remarkable body of evidence concerning the real effects on health of regular smoking of high doses of marijuana. The Coptics called in two leading marijuana experts to testify to the herb's general safety: Dr Lester Grinspoon, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard University and Dr Thomas Ungerlieder, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at UCLA Medical Centre, who also spoke of cannabis's possible medical uses. They called two witnesses at present receiving legal prescriptions for marijuana — one for the treatment of the side-effects of cancer chemotherapy, one for glaucoma, a relatively common eye disease which can lead to eventual blindness. The Coptics also produced the results of one of the first pieces of detailed research on a controlled group of marijuana users. Five professors had examined a group of some 30 Coptics (men, women and children, black and white) and found them a remarkably healthy group of people. Dr Brian Weiss, from the University of Miami Medical School summed up his report as follows:

> Even though the numbers we examined were relatively small, I think it is extremely important to make the observation that some people, at least, can smoke marijuana in high doses for 16 hours daily for up to 50 years, without apparent psychological or physical harm.

The prosecution case against the Coptics alleges that multi-ton quantities of marijuana were unloaded on six separate occasions; that Jamaican military officers were bribed to establish the location and plans of the Jamaican Coast Guard and Defence Force; that several boats and an aeroplane were bought to carry on the trade; and that the Church itself was used as a cover for the operation. If the motion to dismiss the charges succeeds — one American lawyer quoted odds of 9 to 1 against the Church winning — the cannabis trade may be opened to anyone or any bona fide church (whatever that means) which uses marijuana as a sacrament.

THE ETHIOPIAN ZION COPTIC church was founded by a black Jamaican, Louva Williams, who, — according to Dr Melanie Dreher, an expert on Jamaican religion and cannabis use, 'preached the doctrine to bretheren in his yard throughout the 1940s'. He died in 1969 and his successor,



The Coptic's $270,000 mansion in Miami.

Tim Malyon

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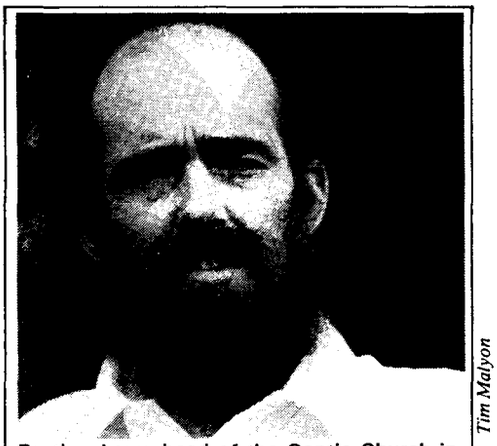

Tim Malyon

Brother Louv, head of the Coptic Church in Miami.

George Baker Ivy, not only saved the Church from disintegrating, but was also responsible for opening its membership to whites. After his death in 1970 leadership passed to Keith Gordon — a man who struck me in my brief meeting as worldly wise. He and two other elders, Laurenton Dickens and Walter Wells, form the Church's spiritual leadership, although business in the US seems to be run by white members, whose names appear on papers for the US-based Zion Coptic Church Inc and Coptic Container Corporation. During the 1970s, despite only a modest growth in membership the Church's assets and influence grew 'exponentially', according to Dr Dreher.

The Church owns a $270,000 mansion on Miami's exclusive Star Island and a small farm in Florida, but its headquarters and main operations are centred in Jamaica. It owns some 4,000 acres of land, producing a huge volume and variety of foodstuffs, some of which are sold through the Church's own supermarket, Wendy's. Coptic Containers handles large scale government and private contracts and two other companies sell vehicles and spare parts. The Church also runs a furniture business and employs in all some 1,000 people on an island where almost a third of the population have no jobs.

On their farms the Coptics have carried out huge renovation and improvement programmes, involving the construction of a lumber yard and mill, irrigation schemes, houses and roads. Their main farm lies in the Parish of St Thomas — one of the island's poorest areas. Following the closure of some of the area's largest employing organisations and the destruction of the coconut industry by yellowing disease, the Coptics are now a major employer in that part of Jamaica, and are popular with local people, including businessmen and politicians. They enjoy a reputation for paying good wages and when I visited their farm the general appearance of the surrounding neighbourhood was certainly one of comparative prosperity.

However the recent purchase of a further large estate in the area has given rise to reports of concern from small tenant farmers who felt they were being turned off their land without adequate compensation and with no prospect of alternative land or employment. Others are not fond of the Church: the Jamaican police frequently raid Coptic farms and recently uprooted five acres of mature cannabis plants; the US Drugs Enforcement Administration have expressed their displeasure and the UK Customs and Excise have just successfully prosecuted a member of the UK Coptics for four offences of importation.

Many Rastafarians are also suspicious of the Coptic's motives and feel that the Church is usurping the true religion of Rasta. In particular, they resent the Coptics' description of them as 'rope heads'.

The Coptics do not believe in the divinity of Haile Selassie nor in the return to Africa, although they do support Africa for the Africans. I felt a strong white fundamentalist influence in their teachings on sin, confession and obediance. Although on the surface their doctrine appears similar to much in Rastafarianism, it is characterised by an oppressive intolerance foreign to the Rasta households in which I have stayed. For example, a recent edition of the Coptic's newspaper *Coptic Time* said:

> The women's liberation movement does not represent liberation, it represents bondage, for they are bound by sin and destruction . . . women now want to leave their home and pursue careers, either by neglecting their own family or by foresaking altogether their greatest blessing, child bearing. This is achieved by murdering their unborn children either by birth control pills and devices or, if that fails, abortion.

While many Rastas are opposed to birth control and abortion as well as being suspicious of the women's movement, they would refrain from conducting the debate in such obsessive and intolerant terms.

THE CHURCH publicises its beliefs and the fight to free ganga through *Coptic Time,* which is mailed free of charge to anybody in the world who asks for it: 200,000 copies are printed for Jamaica alone. A 50,000 watt radio station, Radio Free Coptic, is apparently about to commence transmission to Jamaica, Cuba, Haiti and parts of the US. The Coptics are strongly opposed to communism and to other forms of 'political fuckery'. And while the diverse Rasta movement ('Unity is not necessarily uniformity') has been involved in the anti-colonialist and anti-class struggle, there is little evidence that the Coptics enjoy the same populist support amongst the radical black youth of Jamaica.

Dawn Rich, a regular columnist in the conservative *Daily Gleaner* recently voiced the fears of many who are in favour of the legalisation of cannabis:

> Jamaican small farmers are in the process of being re-colonised by an extremely dubious Miami outfit which proposes to use an indigenous cult — Rastafarianism — as its religious cover, so that it can be free to market ganja, indeed provide a legitimate source of the commodity in the United States.

These fears are echoed by many on the left in Jamaica who repeat an accusation levelled in Dawn Rich's article that the Coptics pay high prices for bulk quantities of cannabis and are cornering the organised export market. In reply the Coptics deny trafficking and correctly point out that they have never been convicted on an organised cannabis trafficking charge. 'Our deity is not one of commerce, yet of unity, love and charity among the masses of the world', says Victor Whitely, the Church's General Secretary. However, the present economic, religious and social climate in Jamaica places cannabis and therefore the Coptics in a key position.

Playing with the supernatural or just playing cards?

Tarot cards are now as important as the Cabala, the Hermetic books, alchemy and astrology as a prime source of the European occultist tradition.

However this has not always been the case. This week Michael Dummett, Professor of Logic at the University of Oxford, describes the true history of this ancient game in The Times Higher Education Supplement.

Also in this week's paper:

*Profile of Emmanuel le Roy Ladurie and his latest book, 'Carnival', is reviewed by Christopher Hill.

*The importance of Wyndham Lewis.

Every Friday

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THE PRESS
Liz Cooper, Dave Berry & Charles Landry

Without free distribution, how can the press be free?

Time to take a French lesson

ONE OF THE MOST important restrictions on the free dissemination of ideas in the British press is rarely touched on by Royal Commissions and campaigns for press freedom; this is the political bias built into the distribution system in this country, which allows wholesalers to select which papers and magazines they sell. Indeed, the 1977 Royal Commission on the Press concluded that the distribution system worked satisfactorily and accepted at face value the admission of the three wholesalers who dominate the business that most of the magazines which they rejected were turned down for purely commercial reasons.

These conclusions are challenged by the latest publication of the Minority Press Group.* W.H.Smiths, John Menzies and Surridge Dawson distribute nearly 70 per cent of the national daily papers and periodicals in Britain. Their domination of the market is increasing as small wholesalers close down. This trend is bound to affect new and radical publications, as some magazines in the UK are distributed more widely than others.

None of the big three wholesalers — who control 69 per cent of the magazine market in England and Wales (Menzies alone has 93 per cent of the Scottish market) — say they refuse to distribute magazines on political grounds. They say, for example, that a magazine won't sell enough copies. However, they sell *Dental Technician,* which sells 3,000 copies, and not the *Leveller,* which sells 7,000. They say a magazine could be libellous — in Britain the distributor is as responsible as the publisher for the content of a publication; but, in fact, the quality papers are much more plagued by writs than the radical press. They further argue that a magazine lacks 'credibility' if it is not part of the advertising-funded, market research-based magazine industry; they are suspicious of magazines not published for conventional commercial reasons. And, in their evidence to the Royal Commission, Smiths said that they had to protect their 'family image'.

These policies have led to Smiths and Menzies rejecting, among others, *Private Eye* (circulation 110,000), *Gay News* (the world's largest selling paper for gay people) and *Socialist Worker* (established for ten years and dropped after a six-week trial in one selected area at a time when its print run was 20,000). More recently, *Undercurrents,* an alternative technology magazine, and *Camerawork,* a radical photographic publication, have not been accepted. Without comprehensive distribution to increase circulation it is very difficult for such magazines to move on from their dependence on voluntary labour and back room production — whatever their editorial content.

ALL THE ARGUMENTS of the distributors seem quite reasonable and their policies easily look like the inevitable consequences of a free market. Until one goes to France. In kiosks all over Paris you can find copies of *Rouge,* a trotskyist paper, and *Gueule Overte,* a radical ecology weekly, competing for display with *Paris Match, Elle* and *Figaro.* Since the Popular Front government of 1947 the right to have magazines and newspapers distributed has been guaranteed by law. The central distributor in France — National Messangerie Du Press Parisienne (NMPP) — is not allowed to make choices about what magazines are to be distributed, except in the areas of pornography and violence. NMPP is immensely proud of the fact that it gives right of accesss to every publisher. As M. Alphonsi, the commercial director, told us recently: 'If the freedom of the press does not include distribution, what price freedom?'

NMPP is an unsubsidised, private, non-profit making company and is the practical translation of the 1947 law. It is controlled by the publishers whose works it distributes through a series of co-operatives based on shared interests. (For example, there is one co-operative for dailies and another for weeklies.) In addition, NMPP helps small journals by making loans for publicity and is prepared to distribute as many copies of a publication as the publisher wishes.

NMPP is solely concerned with making magazines available: it charges for taking them out to the trade and it charges for bringing back unsold copies. This is quite different from the system generally employed in Britain where most magazines are not returnable; it costs the wholesaler money to finance a returns department, and the shops have to pay for unsold copies where sale or return is not offered. But in France it is the publisher who takes the risk, deciding what level of returns they are prepared to finance. The average number of copies returned through NMPP is 35 per cent but the range is from 10 to 80 per cent. In addition, under French libel laws, only the publisher can be sued.

French publishers face many difficulties: production costs are higher and general readership levels lower than in Britain. Yet radical and left-wing newspapers are readily available and financially stable. For example, *Canard Enchainé* — a paper similar to *Private Eye* — sells half a million copies a week. It carries no advertisements but its journalists are among the best paid in France. *Liberation* — a daily with similar aims to the *Leveller* in Britain — sells 40,000 copies a day. Its success in establishing itself since 1974 contrasts starkly with the increasing losses of the monthly *Leveller,* which has repeatedly been refused distribution by the big wholesalers.

The French experience shows that financial self-sufficiency is not an obstacle to an open distribution system. With three commercial distributors dominating the market and thus having the power to make or break a new publication, the case for guaranteeing the right of distribution to all publishers, irrespective of their politics, is very strong.

**Where is the other news?,* £1.25 + 20p P&P. Available from Minority Press Group, 9 Poland Street, London W1. All three authors were part of the original collective of the Publication Distribution Co-operative — a group set up in 1976 to distribute radical publications.

A special correspondent

Junius Richard the Rain King

MR COLVIN R. DE SILVA, the author of Sri Lanka's short-lived 1972 constitution, commenting on the near-impossibility, under Mr J. R. Jayewardene's 1978 constitution, of removing a president from office even if he were guilty of grave misconduct, or rendered incapable by mental or physical infirmity, wrote: 'We may have to put up with not merely a bad president but even with a mad president'. It is of course now generally recognised that some measure of paranoia — that peculiar admixture of delusions of grandeur and persecution together with overweening self-esteem and self-confidence — is a necessary ingredient of the psyche of that special brand of humans whose inclinations are towards national leadership and governance. It is, no doubt, a mental aberration of a kind, but not necessarily one that incapacitates or disqualifies a national leader and is indeed on the whole beneficent for the demands of leadership. All national leaders are paranoid to some degree; such men as de Gaulle, LBJ, Nixon and Idi Amin were perhaps more so than others.

JR's own paranoia has in the past been under control but his recent form has been well below his usual standard. He has in public speeches variously proclaimed that he was king of Sri Lanka in all but name, that he often thought of himself as a flying horse winging from place to place to ensure that all was well in Sri Lanka, as a bird engaged in similar invigilatory dutiues and so forth. (Actually JP cannot fly at all, he has to employ an Air Force helicopter.)

These flights (of fancy) have not gone down well with JR's listeners who have begun to wonder if he was going soft in the head. The fact that the government-controlled press sycophantically gives front page publicity to these insanities does not help. One imagines national leaders in other countries too have their Walter Mitty day dreams but they generally seem to have the good sense to keep them secret from their admiring public.

While he is making himself a figure of fun by such public utterances JR has also manifested another symptom of paranoia which is going to harm him even more. He has developed this rather bad case of persecution mania and he has of late broken with several of his closest friends and supporters in the conviction that they were plotting against him.

Campaigning recently for his candidate at the Anamaduwa bye-election, JR committed a new *faux pas* which has made him even more of a laughing stock. It rained while he was speaking and he immediately claimed that he had what he called 'a mysterious influence over the weather'. He said it with a smile but since he proceeded to expatiate on the subject it was soon apparent he was in deadly earnest. He recalled that even during the general election campaign 'the weather suddenly relented' wherever he turned up to speak; 'an area in the grip of a drought would receive rain and an area which had a surfeit of rain would be suddenly drenched with sunshine'. Since in this country it always rains at the beginning of April (when the bye-election campaign took place) many who were listening to JR may have considered it possible that that shower at Anamaduwa at least was not one that had been caused by JR's magic. Concerned citizens are embarassed for the old gentleman and even think that if these tendencies are allowed to develop in him very much further things could conceivably come to a stage when it might be suggested that it was not in the country's best interests that he should continue in office. And if that were to happen we should be faced with the desperate problem theoretically posed by Mr Colvin R. de Silva.

Colombo

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CIVIL LIBERTY
Terry Munyard

Prison regime turned a 'fitness fanatic' into a 'frightened animal'

The destruction of George Wilkinson

PERHAPS UNEASY at the volume of embarrassing disclosures from inquests of late, the national media managed to avoid the disturbing news about the prison medical service which emerged at the inquest last week into the death of George Wilkinson. *The Times* even came up with the headline 'Staff Cleared over Hunger Strike Death', giving the impression that nothing untoward had happened. Yet the jury's verdict implied a substantial lack of care by the prison authorities.

Wilkinson died aged 33 in Walton Prison, Liverpool on 5 December last year after going on hunger strike, refusing food and fluids for a staggering 17 days. The inquest, which ended last Wednesday, 21 May, lasted eight days and involved more than 30 witnesses, including a procession of prison doctors. It was held in Liverpool where the ghost of Jimmy Kelly still stalks the Merseyside Police. Oddly, press coverage in the Wilkinson case was nothing like that lavished on Jimmy Kelly, who also died in custody, though not in prison.

The Prison Department is well practised in keeping prisoners out of sight and thereby out of mind. But the inadequate reporting was also due to the sensational allegations with which the inquest opened — Wilkinson, it was said, was 'Britain's Most Violent Prisoner'. By such dramatic image-building the authorities managed to divert national attention away from the real issues in the case — the psychological abuse of prisoners by drugs and isolation, and the sorry state of prison medicine.

Although Wilkinson was undoubtedly violent and aggressive, with an 'inadequate' psychopathic personality, the hysterical epithets were simply not borne out by the evidence. He had been involved in two hostage-taking incidents while in prison, but during the last two years of his life he had committed no violence against anybody.

The story of his final period of imprisonment, from August 1975 to December 1979, is a documentary of the destruction of a human spirit. He was moved as far away from his family in County Durham as possible, to Parkhurst in the Isle of Wight. He was refused permission to marry his fiancée. He was heavily sedated with a cocktail of psychotropic drugs — at one stage he was on 900mg of Largactil a day! He was given ECT three times 'to calm him', by a prison doctor who admitted that electric shock treatment has no real effect on aggressive behaviour. He was kept for 18 months in two cage-barred white painted cells, one of which had a wall specially built outside the window to cut him off from the outside world. And for most of his last four years (which he spent in no less than 10 different prison establishments) he was in solitary confinement.

The prison doctors in those 10 prisons all pronounced him mentally fit, although many of them treated him as if he were mentally ill. Only one ever attempted to understand and treat the cause of his violent outbursts, during which he often smashed up his cell. Significantly, that doctor has now left the prison service, apparently disillusioned by the attitude of the authorities to the proper medical treatment of prisoners.

Lord Gifford, counsel for Wilkinson's family, suggested that he finally did become mentally ill with depression — a view shared by most of the ordinary prison warders who guarded him in his last months — and was not in a rational state of mind when he went on hunger strike. (His treatment, it was said, turned him from a 'fitness fanatic' into a 'frightened animal'.)

This view was not taken by the prison authorities, who officially regarded him up to the end primarily as a security problem. But it is in the evidence of the authorities themselves, particularly of the doctors, that the most revealing admissions are made. One prison doctor openly admitted that, in giving drugs the medical service had 'difficulty in balancing between medical needs and control'. Another agreed that it was possible for prison officers to give out drugs like Valium without a doctor's prescription.

The jury of 11 Liverpudlians was given a choice of three verdicts by the Coroner, Mr Roy Barter: self-neglect, lack of care, or misadventure. After directing them on the meaning of the first two, Mr Barter told the jury that if they found 'a substantial element' of both self-neglect and lack of care, then misadventure was the appropriate verdict. In the event the jury's verdict of misadventure cannot be taken as the anodyne finding of no fault it is usually understood to be. It must, on that direction, have involved a finding that there was a substantial lack of care by the prison authorities — a fact confirmed by a group of the jurors after the inquest.

ECONOMIC MONITOR

Edited by David Blackaby

Equality in China

AN INVESTIGATION of economic standards in rural China shows that government policy has resulted in narrower rural-urban inequalities than those of many Third World countries with similar modernisation programmes. There is a danger, however, that the growth-oriented policies of the post-Mao leadership will reintroduce inequalities and powerful groups to defend them.

Income is distributed to individuals by a rule of work points. To ensure all team members achieve a minimum level of consumption grain is distributed in two parts: a 'basic grain ration' and 'work point grain'. As a result of such policies it was found that the top decile of workers in two Guandong villages received 16 per cent of collective income and the bottom decile 6-7 per cent.

One important cause of inequality, highlighted by the study, is the fact that women are rated below men for work points. In 1973 a woman could, at best, hope to earn only 8.5 points a day compared to 11 for a man.

A significant household sector exists alongside the state and collective sectors. Private plots, although only 5 per cent of the total arable land, contribute between 10 and 25 per cent of a commune's production team. As mechanisation increases, however, the ratio of collective to private household income increases. For example, a highly mechanised commune in central China has increased the public to private income ratio from 70:30 in 1957 to 90:10 in the mid 1970s.

Socialist Development and Rural Inequality: The Chinese Countryside in the 1970s, P. Nolan and G. White, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, October 1979

The viability of work-sharing

THE TUC has recently advocated 'work sharing' as a method of directly reducing unemployment. This would involve shortening the average number of hours worked each week, lengthening holidays and earlier retirement as a threefold method of sharing a given amount of work amongst a larger number of people. This simplistic view of labour market behaviour may be based on a fallacy in that radical restructuring of the labour market might result in there being less work to share around, thus potentially exacerbating the unemployment problem. For example, reducing the working week might result in a rise in unit costs, leading employers to reduce their demand for overall man hours, and hire even fewer employees than before.

Unit costs are to some extent influenced by the productivity of hours; previous estimates of the productivity of hours have suggested that a 10 per cent reduction of hours would result in a 20 per cent reduction in output. However, estimates based on a more sophisticated technique show a reduction of output to be only 6 per cent. If this is the case some of the arguments against work-sharing may not be as persuasive as previously thought. (D. Leslie)

The Productivity of Hours in U.K. Manufacturing and Production Industries, D. Leslie and J. Wise, *Economic Journal*, March 1980.

Excessive bank profits

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS preventing the payment of interest on current account deposits result in commercial banks making profits higher than can be justified on grounds of efficiency. In 1967 the National Board for Prices and Incomes reported that the London clearing banks' profits had been '... excessive in that they had accrued in part simply from a high average level of Bank Rate ...'. Due to legal protection granted to the clearing banks the magnitude of the excess profits were not revealed.

New evidence suggests that after allowing for changes in costs, a one percentage point increase in Bank Rate raised profits by £34m. in the period 1951-1970. At the same time excess profits due to non-payment of a competitive rate of interest on current account deposits and a lag in the response of offsetting allowance, such as bank charges on current accounts, when Bank Rate increases, amounted to £2,166m. Various ancillary siervices might make this figure slightly lower.

The Sensitivity of the London Clearing Bank Profits to Changes in Bank Rate: 1951-1970, N. Peera, *Applied Economics*, March 1980.

THE TIMES
Educational Supplement

This Week

Corporal punishment: a probationary teacher's diary

Asa Briggs on a social history of bastardy

Roy Shaw on television

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London Diary

☐Over a decade ago Gerald Scarfe produced a cartoon for a *Private Eye* cover. It illustrated the support being given by the Labour Government of Harold Wilson to the American war in Vietnam. Scarfe did not leave much to the imagination. His caricature was a savage depiction of the British Prime Minister with a long, forked tongue, the end of which was firmly embedded inside the posterior of the American President. The composition was entitled: 'Special Relationship'. I was reminded of this image most forcefully on reading Lord Carrington's third expression of regret for ATV's decision to screen the 'Death of a Princess'. The Foreign Secretary stated that the film was 'offensive' and proceeded to prostrate himself before the House of Saud. When Lord Carrington, a descendant of one of the great, old feudal families of Britain, apologises to the obscurantist barbarians who rule Saudi Arabia he does so not because he respects Islam, but because of what his deputy, Sir Ian Gilmour, has described as Britain's 'close political and economic relationship' with the Saudi ruling family. In a word: OIL. But this close relationship extends, it would appear, beyond politics and economics and into the heart of at least two nuclear families. Gilmour's son David is an editor of the London-based *Middle East International*, a magazine not known for its critical attitude to a number of Arab governments. Carrington's eldest son and heir, Rupert, is an employee of Morgan Grenfell, a merchant bank which is heavily involved in Arab capital. Obviously these facts do not explain Tory sycophancy towards the Saudis. They merely indicate that oil profits and the present Government are connected on more levels than meet the eye. In reality the West is petrified at the possibility of the Saudi Royal Family being overthrown. Nothing which destabilises the medieval theocracy is to be encouraged. Antony Thomas's film was popular among many Muslims who are hostile to the Arab monarchs and video-tapes are reportedly circulating within the Kingdom itself. It is hardly a surprise that the stoning of women to death for adultery never arouses protests from the British Foreign Office. But there is a need for a greater show of audacity. Surely a replacement Olympics could be organised without further delay in Riyadh. That would both help to heal old wounds and aid the struggle for democracy.

☐Story number one on 14 May is from Liverpool. The trade-union mobilisation here was spearheaded by the print unions with SOGAT in the lead. Local SOGAT officials, feeling the need for a bit of fire at the rally, decided to invite *Daily Mirror* columnist Paul Foot, who agreed to speak with alacrity. Bill Keys from the TUC General Council (the main speaker) stated he had no objections to Foot speaking on the same platform. Five days before the meeting an embarrassed and apologetic SOGAT official rang Foot to say that the invitation had been withdrawn. No reasons were given. I have since discovered that opposition came neither from the Labour Party nor from the Communist Party but from the other print union, the NGA. Further investigation revealed that the local NGA fulltime official who vetoed Foot's attendance is supposed to be a leading member of the *Militant* tendency. If this were true it would appear that *Militant*'s much-publicised struggle for democracy in the Labour Movement applies only to itself. I hope that I have been misinformed and look forward to reading a denial in the *NS* letters column.

☐Story number two is from the parish of Framlingham in Suffolk. Readers will be surprised to learn that the Suffolk peasantry did not respond positively to the TUC's call for action. A writer in the duplicated parish magazine wrote: 'Thank goodness we still retain the old fashioned relationships between "master and man", that commonsense prevails on the farms and in the small towns and villages which make up the countryside communities. Perhaps because there is always something to be done and light evenings mean work instead of the influential "telly" that in the country we still manage to think for ourselves and act according to our own initiative without being influenced by the troublemakers in industry.' The price of a large farm today is over a quarter of a million pounds. The average wage of a farmworker is £40 per week.

☐A thirty-one year old Irishman from Derry describes a bizarre interrogation to which he was subjected last April. Hugh Duffy was taken to an interrogation room where he was seated opposite British soldiers in civilian clothes, but with gas masks over their heads. One of them had a gas-filled lighter refill which he utilised to make a hissing sound under the table. No words were spoken, but occasional gestures were made as if they were going to shoot Duffy. After four hours he was released unconditionally. This strange operation is part of the disorientation process being used in Northern Ireland and, while it sounds amusing, its effects on teenagers can be fairly serious. But then that is how the British Empire chooses to Fight Back.

☐On hearing that Liu Shaoqi had been rehabilitated in Peking, I dug into my collection of old pamphlets and was rewarded by a 1950 offering by Liu entitled *Internationalism and Nationalism*. Will this be reappearing in Peking, I wonder. For Liu attacks all those communists who: (a) 'carry out a policy of national selfishness and sacrificing the common international interests of working people throughout the world to the interests of the upper stratum of their own nation' and (b) 'employ national conservatism and exclusive ideas to oppose proletarian internationalism ... and to oppose the Socialist Soviet Union.'

I predict that Liu's rehabilitation marks the beginning of a process of Sino-Soviet *rapprochement*. Leader-writers in Fleet Street take note.

☐As one of the signatories of the full-page ad that appeared in *The Times* many years ago demanding the legalisation of cannabis, I am somewhat disappointed that Maurice Bishop's revolutionary government in Grenada has outlawed the cultivation of the herb. The reasons they give are not totally convincing. If the real problem is illegal exports and pressure on the land, then surely the way out was to establish a state monopoly and nationalise the entire cannabis industry, preferably under workers' control. I fear that the decision is more the result of some Stalino-moralist in the new government. The effect will be to encourage the growth of a *lumpen* opposition and there will be an increase in the sordid operations of illegal hustlers. I hope that the decision is not a permanent one.

☐I am told that the Tooting branch of the Communist Party has recently affiliated to the anti-abortion organisation LIFE. I trust that this grotesque turnabout will not go unpunished.

☐The Kwangju uprising in South Korea is a stinging indictment of the succession of dictatorships that the United States has sustained in the peninsula. It would be foolish in the extreme, however, to imagine that the South Korean masses are greatly inspired by the 'socialist' model in the North. For the 'Great and Beloved Leader of 40 million Korean people' is an extremely unsavoury parody of the 'People's Friend' who ruled the USSR in the Thirties. I recall one visit to Pyongyang in the early Seventies. After numerous visits to museums (40 rooms on Kim Il Sung and family and five on the history of Korea) and the like I was finally taken to the zoo. Somewhat bewildered, I asked whether this was part of my rest and recreation since I am not particularly fond of animals. My interpreter smiled and silently led me towards the parrot cage. After a few minutes' wait the parrot performed and uttered the immortal words: 'Long Live Comrade Kim Il Sung'. The visit to the zoo was over. The students and workers in South Korea, judging from their slogans, are fighting for a slightly different society.

Tariq Ali

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐There are, however, emergency stores of contraceptives. One official said: 'We have to cater for natural instincts. The last thing we want is a baby boom nine months after a nuclear strike.' — *Sun* (Jessica Yates)

☐The regular exercise involves having to rescue alive two hostages held captive by half-a-dozen terrorists inside a smoke-filled windowless room. The 'hostages' are two SAS officers and the 'terrorists' straw-filled dummies sitting on a semi-circle of chairs. Time and again they succeed. — *Daily Telegraph* (T. Mangold)

☐Mr Carruthers said office staff should not be too prudish about colleagues' behaviour. 'Some matters were those some people might not mind at all, showing one's operation scar, for instance, or gyrating as a stripper or showing underwear.' — *The Times* (Polly Fisher)

☐Seen urinating through the letter box of the Nationwide Building Society in High Street, Tottenham, 22-year-old Maurice Walsh told a police officer: 'That is what I think of the interest rate.' Walsh, a mechanic, of Alexandra Road, South Tottenham, was fined £20 for insulting behaviour. — *Evening Standard* (J.F. Mills)

☐Inspector Francis agreed that truncheons should only be used for self-defence, but he added: 'One could argue that attack is the best form of defence.' — *Guardian* (Diane Barnes)

We should like to make it clear that the final This England in last week's paper was not from the London Evening News.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Paul Johnson's nightmare

From Brian Smith

After the Tory election victory in June 1970 Paul Johnson wrote a gloomy London Diary in the *New Statesman* about his experience that awful night. I was so impressed by his piece that I jotted it down at the time. Here are a few of his most forceful remarks: 'Came the awful moment when the figures for Guildford chattered onto the great white screen, and I knew that the nightmare was true . . . My eye settled on the massive mug of a city banker, its well-nourished folds settling slowly into an expression of profound relief . . . It was a bad night, rendered bearable only by my still more painful memories of 1959.'

I have recently discovered, however, that that night wasn't such a nightmare for Paul Johnson after all. While waiting in a dentist's surgery last week I picked up a copy of the May 1979 edition of the *Illustrated London News*. There I read as follows, in a gushing profile of Mrs Thatcher by Paul Johnson: 'On the night of the Tory victory in 1970 I went to the splendid party Lady Hartwell, wife of the *Daily Telegraph*'s proprietor, gave at the Savoy. Mrs Thatcher arrived around midnight, fresh from triumph at the Finchley poll. "By this time next week you will be in the cabinet", I greeted her.'

53 Kalliness, Weisdale, Shetland

The nuclear cage

From Dr P.M.S. Jones

There can seldom have been an article with so many inaccuracies and misconceptions as Duncan Campbell's article, 'The Nuclear Cage' (NS 28 March). All of these cannot be dealt with in the confines of a short letter. There are, nevertheless, certain more serious allegations which cannot be allowed to stand without correction and rebuttal.

The UKAEA is singled out as being a 'disservice to democracy' and the AEA Constabulary is labelled a 'private police force'. Mr Campbell should be aware that the UKAEA is a vote-funded body whose accounts are vetted in the same way as nationalised industries and whose major areas of expenditure have to be approved by the Department of Energy. It is fully accountable to Parliament. AEA researchers into the alternative energy sources conduct their work fairly and objectively, without prejudice towards or against the case for nuclear power. The AEAC is answerable through its Chief Constable to both the UKAEA and the Secretary of State for Energy. The policy-making and implementation of the UK nuclear programme is carried out in a fair and open manner and does not threaten the civil liberties of either nuclear workers or the general public.

Campbell's treatment of nuclear risks and radiation exposure reveals considerable misunderstanding. Accidents at Brown's Ferry and Three Mile Island did not show that Rasmussen's risk analysis technique was wrong; the utilities and the NRC were criticised for not making sufficient use of the Rasmussen event tree and fault tree techniques. Holdren's critique of the Inhaber Report (which is cited as evidence of the poverty of risk analysis) in fact bears out Inhaber's central conclusion that nuclear power is very safe indeed. In considering low level dose commitments Campbell ignores existing background levels of radiation and tacitly assumes that the radiation from nuclear installations is more dangerous and somehow different in kind from the natural background.

The author questions the safety and reliability of the PWR, on the basis of some very inaccurate information on French experience and that of the US Trojan station (upon which the UK PWR design will largely be based). There has been no attempt to cover up cracking in French PWRs; after their decision a special safety study was carried out before the decision to start up these reactors was taken. French trade unions then went ahead with the fuelling of Tricastin and Gravelines. There is no truth in his claim that the French PWR, Bugey 1, is being operated with a radioactive leak. The Westinghouse PWR, Trojan, is far from being 'a laggard in a mediocre field of nuclear runners'; its 1979 load factor was a very satisfactory 87.2 per cent (*Nucleonics Week* 22/3/80).

The Government is not attempting to 'cut corners' in its nuclear programme. Erecting the first PWR at an existing site is not a shortcut in the licensing process, nor is sub-contracting of work from the NII to the AEA (this is standard practice and has taken place for many years). Furthermore, there is no reason why the PWR public inquiry and NII assessment should necessarily be held sequentially (as Campbell implied). They may be seen as part of the same licensing investigative procedures.

It is an elementary rule of costing that one cannot directly compare costs from different years without allowing for differing money values. Thus Campbell is misleading in claiming that the capital costs of Dungeness B have escalated tenfold, and in contrasting estimates of costs for generation from reactors yet to be built with the operating costs of existing fossil or nuclear stations. The Government's new nuclear programme will help to keep electricity prices lower than they would otherwise be and allow cost savings to be made through closure of old inefficient fossil fuel stations.

I am disappointed that the author, who obviously devoted considerable time to the preparation of his review, should have chosen to disregard the wealth of informative material released by the nuclear and electricity industries.

UK Atomic Energy Authority, 11 Charles II Street, London SW1

Isolation treatment

From Patricia Hewitt

Micheal Meacher's note (NS 16 May) concerning the case of Michael Williams v. the Home Office contains an inaccuracy. He states that the Home Office did not deny that Mr Williams was held in a cell with lights on all the time, that he was watched while on the lavatory and in the shower etc. The Home Office did in fact contest this evidence.

The result of the judgment in this case is that prisoners can be isolated for months at a time in breach of the prison rules without any hearing and the courts will not intervene to assert their rights. No other western country has a regime like the control unit which has been upheld by the court.

National Council for Civil Liberties, 186 Kings Cross Road, London WC1

Irish persecution

From John Arden

I have been away in America since February and thus did not see the items of correspondence you printed following my piece on the Prevention of Terrorism Act but now I have seen them may I make a comment or two?

First, let me apologise unreservedly to Mr Peter Grimes for getting his name wrong, which was a simple but inexcusable confusion caused by the circumstance that I knew of two people with the same surname and subliminally muddled them up as I wrote. But I am grateful for his correction to my account of his mistreatment: the true facts would seem to strengthen my message by emphasising how the PTA enables the police to over-ride even such aparent safeguards of our liberties as habeas corpus and makes nonsense of any idea that the courts are there to protect us from arbitrary confinement and the illegal infliction of pain.

I could wish that your TV critic, Mr Barnes, had concerned himself with such implications rather than chopping logic about who is married to whom. I have never concealed the D'Arcy/Arden wedlock: but I thought it unnecessarily uxorious to introduce the phenomenon into every irrelevant context. It is true though that largely because we cohabit I was first made aware of her persecution — which I deliberately did *not* compare in intensity with that of Dr Sakharov. I rather intended to illustrate the similarity in thinking and technique between our 'security services' and those of the Eastern bloc: and the *dissimilarity* of British public responses thereto — a point confirmed by Mr Barnes's letter. Anyway, when we hear of Russian dissidents in trouble, is it not often from their spouses that the information reaches us? And does this discredit the stories? As I write, Ms D'Arcy is commencing a four month prison term in Armagh for refusing on principle to pay a £40 fine imposed for her part in a peaceful feminist demonstration against the conditions in which women are held in the goal there. If this protest had taken place in Red Square, we would maybe have seen its violent disruption by the police on TV: and Mr Barnes could have written a wittily compassionate review of the programme.

Gort Roe, Corrandulla, Co. Galway, Ireland

Jesus's birthday

From Nicolas Walter

R. J. S. Baker says it doesn't matter when Jesus was born (NS 16 May); I say it doesn't matter whether he lived at all. If he did, there is certainly no reliable evidence about his alleged life and no independent reference to his followers for 80 years after his alleged death. If he didn't, there is surely no difficulty in seeing how the story could have been developed, if the clues in the canonical Gospels and Epistles are supplemented by those in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the apocryphal Gospels.

Historical existence isn't guaranteed by a vivid character or a wide influence, as may be seen in Western literature from Homer's heroes and heroines to Goethe's Faust and Werther. It is just as reasonable to doubt the existence of Jesus as of Noah, Abraham and Moses, of Krishna, Mahavira and the Buddha, of Hercules, Romulus and Remus, or of King Arthur, William Tell and Robin Hood. The arguments have been put with great care and in great detail by several reputable scholars from J. M. Robertson to G. A. Wells, and the problem will not be solved by denying that it exists.

Leopold Kohr tries to correct my statement that 'a decade obviously ends at the end of the tenth year' by the statement that 'the Christian era started with the year "nought", not with the year one' (NS 23 May). He doesn't know what he is talking about. As I said in an earlier letter (NS 18 April), and as may be seen in the original sources or in any serious study of the subject, there was no year 'nought'. In the Christian chronology which was established in the sixth century and which is still employed today, 1 BC (the last year 'Before Christ') is immediately followed by AD 1 (the first 'Year of the Lord'), the latter being 754 of the Roman calendar, when Jesus was wrongly believed to have been born. Our lives begin with the year 'nought', but our calendar begins with the year 'one'.

Rationalist Press Association, 88 Islington High Street, London N1

Transported

From Joyce Marlow

I trust Geoffrey Robertson is more accurate if and when he is actually in a courtroom than in writing the NS diary (16 May). The Tolpuddle Martyrs were not transported to Botany Bay in 1836. Admitting 'Botany Bay' as a generic term — George Loveless was sent to Van Diemen's Land, his five convicted companions to far-flung parts of New South Wales — all six men were sentenced and transported in 1834.

109 St Albans Road, Sandridge, St Albans

Freudian relevance

From Alexander Newman

Pierre Joris (NS 16 May), in an otherwise quite interesting account of Lacan's development, says: '. . . if the work of Freud is still relevant today in the field of psychoanalysis and in the wider field of the human sciences, this is due in the main to Lacan's efforts.' Does Joris really mean this? It may well be true of certain quarters in Paris and — although I doubt it — France. But the world? Surely not.

19 Chalcot Road, London NW1

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

Told you so

Over the years (and there are now over four of them) that we have been together, I think that I have managed to make it crystal clear in this column that I have no very high opinion of the French race when viewed purely as people, if you follow me. Indeed, my custom of referring to them breezily as Frogs has wounded more than one correspondent and I have had, sparing no expense, to send them an apologetic post-card of Exeter Cathedral (West Front) in order to calm them down. I admire the French brains (no country educates its children more relentlessly and so to speak, ruthlessly — there is no rubbish there about three half-holidays a week, and games are kept to a minimum). I like their wine, though I do not, as some do (and very displeasing it is), sniff it and gargle it and hold it up to the light: I just pour it out and gulp it down. I like most of their countryside, merely wishing that the Dordogne district could change places with the Pas de Calais and thus become easier of access. I like their cathedrals, and Chartres best of all. Almost all the new houses that they have built this century are totally hideous, but there, one need not look at them. I like their omelettes. I like their bread. I like their artichokes. I like their food in general, but I do not much like *them,* and to this antipathy I have always added a slight measure of distrust.

Although not at all given to weighty pronouncements (they would sound merely frivolous and rather silly on my lips), I am at the moment in a rare I-told-you-so mood for I did, many years ago now, point out both on the air and in print but to an unheeding nation that (a) if firm steps were not taken, the Post Office was going to get steadily less efficient and more expensive, and (b) that not the faintest good would ever come to us from any alliance that included the French. And now, as I sit smugly back, pray observe the results of my forecasts. The Post Office has by now made it quite impossible for the ordinary person to send either a parcel or a telegram and one can only assume that its ultimate aim is to put paid to stamps and letters too. Then they can *all* put up POSITION CLOSED (no 'sorry', you note) at their guichets, of which already five out of six are closed, and sit back, make cups of tea and buff their nails. The cheekier ones can stick their tongues out at us through the bars.

The French feeling towards us and the Common Market is well expressed in a satirical newspaper, *Le Canard Enchaîné,* and in a cartoon which shows our admirable Prime Minister being burned at the stake as a heretic and on the feast of Joan of Arc, with G. d'Estaing rigged up as a bishop while, from his mouth, a balloon issues stating that vengeance tastes sweeter when roasted. And from a cloud, that gloomy old General, haloed, bellows out the equivalent of our Ha! Ha! Ha! which, in frog, seems to be Ah! Ah! Ah! This piece of tasteless effrontery is shown as taking place in 'Place du Vieux Marché Commun'. They want, it is clear, to be rid of us. Ditto. Who can ever trust such shifty people? Sold any lamb recently?

But cheer up, for now, it seems, there are going to be fewer of them (French, not lambs). A startling headline in a national daily said 'Sagging Birthrate Worries French'. Cause and effect come into play here and the more worldly-wise among us are driven to the conclusion that the birthrate is obviously not the only thing that has, in this connection, sagged. Equipped with the knowledge that the first definitions that Chambers gives of the verb 'to sag' are 'to bend, sink, or hang down', one can only congratulate the *Times* journalist, for it was he, who produced such a descriptive and evocative word. 'Drooping' would, I suppose, have been a possible alternative, and would also carry its own message. Frenchmen, considered for centuries to be the very last word in virility and in saucy conduct at nighttime (or, if pushed, daytime too), and to be experts in boudoir behaviour leading to the production of little ones, are clearly losing their touch, or something. They are now, we read, to be bribed into acting in a manlier manner. Everything hangs (though not in this case down, or all is lost) on achieving a third child, for whom the financial allowances are to be lavish in the extreme. *Eh bien, allez-y, mes braves.*

The French tongue has, it is true, supplied our language with various enrichments, though here again not everything in this collaboration has been pleasurable. The word *fauteuil,* used to describe the comfier and more expensive cinema seats, has for years been a terrible bother to pince-nezed ladies perched up in box-office booths and struggling to give, in a refined manner, the word its proper frog pronunciation, and also to usherettes, who have struggled rather less and refer to these seats as 'footles'. Some of the words that we have borrowed sound equally odd in the original. Take for instance and if you will *blancmange.* What a very unfortunate arrangement of letters, and sounding worse when uttered, in the customary English fashion, as 'blurmonge'. It once meant, as reliable old Chambers rattles out, 'fowl or other flesh with cream' and was, perhaps, a first cousin to fricassee, but schoolboys once knew, and maybe still do, what it now results in — a large mound of a white or pink substance violently a-wobble as it is borne in. Another name for it is 'shape' (and shape of one hardly likes to say what). Shape is often accompanied, if your luck is really out, by those sour dried apricots which, soaked in water overnight, have become sour wet apricots.

The letters BL have recently taken on a significance which hardly lifts the heart and how odd it is that so many words beginning with 'bl' are far from agreeable. Apart from blancmange, consider bloat and blaspheme. What of blunderbuss and blasé? There was, heaven knows, nothing very cheery about the blitz. I am not, myself, too keen on the word blood and some of the things that go with it, such as bloodsuckers and blood sports and bloody-mindedness. Then there are the blues and blotch and that very distasteful word, blubber. Having read so many misleading publishers' puffs for worthless books, I don't greatly care for blurb. There is, I confess, bloom which is pleasant, but it leads on to bloomers (not cheerful, either as blunders or those voluminous knickers), which in turn leads us on to the Bloomsbury Group and the nervous spasms that that name now occasions. Add on, for good measure, blizzard, blob, blister, blethers, blimey and blemish, and you will, I am sure, begin to see what I mean, though older readers will, of course, have affectionate memories of dear old Blighty. For the medical specialist, I append a real horror and it is blennorrhoea. It means a discharge of mucus. Convinced?

To cheer us up and end on a jollier note, let me recommend almost any word beginning with the letters 'tw'. There are our feathered friends going tweet tweet while we sit in the sun and twiddle our thumbs. There are stars twinkling and 'sweet and twenty' and Tweedledee and his not dissimilar brother. There is the happy twang of a ukelele (a musical instrument that reveals my age group), and the agreeable smell of rough tweeds, and hilarious old Widow Twankey, the Peking *blanchisseuse,* falling headlong over a pail ('Drat that boy of mine, Aladdin!') as she makes her entrance. There is *Twelfth Night* and ladies twittering and dancing couples twirling, and possibly doing the twist, and just a song at twilight, and twigs and the jovial 'Do you twig?' (translated by some into *twiggez-vous*?, a query constantly heard at Palazzo Bultitude). Well then, twain and twin and tweak are all rather jolly. To look just for a moment on the dark side, there is, I suppose, twinge (one's old wound playing up, or a sign to the rheumaticky, to whom go all one's sympathies, that a wet day is on the cards). There is also, I regret to say, the word 'twerp', which I seem to remember as arriving during the war ('Oh you are a twerp!') and coming possibly from America and indicating general inefficiency and hopelessness. The word seems to have caught on splendidly in this country. I wonder why.

Roger Woddis

Dust

Ronald Reagan looks certain to be the Republican nomination for the US presidential election.

Tell me not in mirthful numbers
Life is but a blissful dream;
Clouds that drift across our slumbers
May be closer than they seem.

Votes are vital, as they should be,
And November is the goal;
Dust from Mount St Helen's could be
Far less lethal on the whole.

Liberty with lighted beacon
Beckons to the huddled slave;
Indian, Black and Puerto Rican
Wince when they return the wave.

Some who seek a crown of glory
Claim to be too dumb to lie;
Aging heads, however hoary,
Are prepared to do or dye.

Let us then, with pride and passion
And a heart for any fate,
Faces set and slightly ashen,
Hail the likely candidate.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Michael Schmidt

Short Back & Sides

The Oxford Book of Contemporary Verse 1945-1980 edited by D. J. Enright *Oxford* £7.50 & £3.50

In the world of lexicography there is a perennial debate: should the dictionary reflect usage or define meanings? In the world of Oxford anthologies a similar debate exists. Larkin, in his *Twentieth Century Verse,* welcomed by Donald Davie as 'a calamity' when it appeared some years ago, was a modernist. He was so keen to be representative that his book appeared undiscriminating; he had effaced himself altogether from its later pages. By contrast, Enright is reactionary, seeking to define rather than reflect. At least, that is what his introduction promises. And yet I rather think his book, too is 'a calamity', though I thoroughly *enjoyed* disagreeing with it.

There are two radically reactionary elements in Enright's anthology, both of them commendable. For him, English Verse is verse in English, not just in England. How original that sounds — at a time when nations and even regions assert the 'independence' of their poetries. A poet's *pais* is, in the last record, his language, as Octavio Paz has reminded Spanish writers. It is a delight to see James K. Baxter cheek by jowl with Patricia Beer and Charles Tomlinson in the pages of Enright's anthology, Jarrell beside Sisson.

Pleasingly old-fashioned too is the canopied Procrustean bed which Enright's introduction seems to promise for his guests. 'Art is not an outbreak of violence,' he writes,

> or a mere imitation of it, but an ordering of experience, however precarious-seeming, of internal and external events, which enacts and interprets disorder more firmly and poignantly than anything else can do, even while containing it.

It may be bold of Enright to go so far as to *advocate* a poetry of 'civility, passion and order': in a riven, disoriented society the true subversive is the civiliser who rejects the common taste for blood — sacrificial, menstrual, revolutionary — and insists on preserving and advocating old civilities. Enright aims to show that the wilderness in which Larkin went astray is in fact a garden. To this end he excludes a number of interesting aborigines and gives a short back and sides to several of those who remain and whom we would expect to prove troublesome in such an ordered world. The audacity of Enright's enterprise produced in me a brief *frisson.*

Brief, because Enright fails, in the poems he chooses, to make his case; and he has a case to make. As a *personal* anthology, a window on Enright, his peculiarities, quirks, friendships, perversities and cooler judgments, the book could hardly be bettered. It is to him what *A Certain World* is to Auden. Enright is so in character! He likes 'sentence' and — in his choice from R.S. Thomas — sententiousness if the tone is grim and authoritative (Thomas is not well-represented); he likes anecdote and plot poems better than 'mood' poems, so there are some good and some not-so-good stories; he likes jokes, and there are a few of these (*pace* Amis and *his* Oxford Book); he likes sex, but is less keen on love. He does not like 'modernism' and makes even those poets most deeply in Eliot's and Pound's debt look uncharacteristically wan. He likes best of all entertainment and uplift. These elements of preference determine his choice of poems. It is in his preferences more than in his principles that he is deficient as an anthologist..

Most of the 40 writers whom he includes emerged decisively after the war; each gets about seven pages — a democratic allocation of space, unruffled by considerations of relative merit. He has sought out poems which 'seem to me representative of their authors'. He should have added that he also chose poems — often — which exemplified the 'civility' he espouses, so that Gunn, Tomlinson, Hughes and others may feel a little shorn. He has avoided 'the more frequently anthologized poems' — surely an error in an Oxford book, especially if it involves the exclusion of important work (which it often does). Sometimes he chooses longish poems which take up so much of a poet's seven-page ration that better, more characteristic work is squeezed out. Berryman suffers especially badly. No principle appears to inform the ordering of each poet's chosen pieces: the poems are scrambled, preserving neither chronology nor thematic progression.

The disparity between what the editor promises and what he delivers is the most unnerving aspect of his book. For him, poetry is 'a public affair' — though not programmatic, not with an ideological mission. He manages to include some poems satirical of the ideological left, since poetry *against* political poetry isn't political poetry. He excludes poetry as a 'self-administered form of therapy', sparing us the rigours of Plath and Sexton; yet we are given blatantly confessional verses by Peter Porter and others which do not differ in kind from work excluded on categorical grounds. Mr Enright wishes to 'insist that poetry is a *unique* form of expression and communication'; yet he praises in it the very qualities it shares with prose forms. He includes work he 'understands' (and how prosaic that word can prove) 'at least in a rewarding measure'. Light verse, anecdote, rumination and sentiment displace a great deal.

Perhaps it is time to toast a few absent friends. Given the presence of R. S. Thomas and Seamus Heaney, I wonder (and perhaps they wonder too) where Patrick Kavanagh has got to. Where is W. S. Graham? Where are J. V. Cunningham, Theodore Roethke, X. J. Kennedy; where are the younger Americans? I name only a few, and those who fall within Enright's self-appointed, civilizing brief. Amongst the British I might ask after Jennings, Adcock (with her New Zealand credentials), Hamburger, Singer, Silkin; or, as reasonably, after some of the younger poets.

Still, there is much meat in Enright's book, and it is likely to irritate most acutely just those readers who have no need of anthologies anyway. It will not do serious harm to the reader looking for a way into modern poetry, provided he doesn't stop there. Certain figures stand out decisively even in this context: Stevie Smith, Elizabeth Bishop, Randall Jarrell, C. H. Sisson, Robert Lowell, George Mackay Brown, Richard Wilbur, Donald Davie, Philip Larkin, James K. Baxter, Charles Tomlinson, Geoffrey Hill: it is enough to be getting on with. And there is a point Enright makes which I heartily second: it is time poetry became again something to be read, not merely something to be written. Enright includes a poem by Derek Walcott called 'Volcano'. Even some of Enright's 40 elect might take it to heart:

> One could abandon writing
> for the slow-burning signals
> of the great, to be, instead
> their ideal reader, ruminative,
> voracious, making the love of masterpieces
> superior to attempting
> to repeat or outdo them,
> and to be the greatest reader in the world.

Enright's anthology does not show him to be the greatest reader; his attempt to define rather than reflect a modern canon was doomed from the outset because he was not prepared for self-effacement or for the rigours of thorough re-assessment. He started from where he was, and he didn't get very far.

In clockwise direction starting left: D. J. Enright, Thom Gunn, Randall Jarrell, Robert Lowell, John Berryman, Richard Wilbur, Peter Porter, Ted Hughes, Philip Larkin, Sylvia Plath

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Stuart Hall

Theory & Experience (1)

STUART HALL opens a debate about the present state of Marxist theory in Britain.

The Poverty of Theory by E. P. THOMPSON
Merlin £10 & £3.90

EDWARD THOMPSON's *The Poverty of Theory* continues to dominate intellectual debate on the left, more than a year after its publication. Part of its impact is attributable to Thompson's stature as a social historian of the first rank. *The Making of the English Working Class* is a rare and remarkable example of a book which has both achieved classic academic status *and* is an inspirational text in the socialist movement. The 'new' social history — including History Workshop — would be unthinkable without it. Many of his qualities as historian are on display in the new collection of essays — especially in 'The Peculiarities of the English', first published as a polemic against Perry Anderson, but now more valued in its own right as a brilliant sketch of English historical development. But the continuing impact of the volume must be assigned to the name-essay, 'The Poverty of Theory', which appears here for the first time.

It is this essay which students are clutching to their hearts and which has raised the dust in intellectual circles. It develops into a sustained assault (first signalled at the end of *Whigs And Hunters*) against Marxist structuralism in general, and the influence of Louis Althusser and the British 'Althussereans' in particular. It is this 'taking of positions' within a current intellectual struggle for hegemony inside the British Left which has given the book its continuing political resonance — as well as its distinctive whiff of cordite.

In fact, the *Poverty of Theory* appeared when 'Althussereanism', as a unified theoretical tendency, had already begun to fall apart. Althusser's work has been subject to criticism from both within and outside the circle of those whom he influenced, in addition to his own 'self-criticism'. And this has been followed by a return to more concrete, historical-based kinds of analysis. The question is whether this is simply a return to the *status quo ante bellum,* or whether, despite its weaknesses, there is something to be learned from the 'theoreticist' interlude, which we would be foolish to throw out with the bathwater.

Against 'Althussereanism' as doctrine, Thompson scores many palpable hits. The formalist, super-logical and rationalist framework for analysing social formations, embodied in Althusser's theory of 'structuralist causality', concealed an entrenched idealism which Thompson (but also many others) rightly recognises as a self-generating theoreticist 'machine'. An excessive rationalism disfigured his privileging of 'Big' Theory with a capital T, as the judge and guarantor of Marxist intellectual and political practice: especially when Theory operated only at the highest levels of abstraction, and was represented as a wholly autonomous practice.

Much of this was exercised in the context of a series of attacks on various theoretical 'errors' — also graced with grand capitals (Empiricism, Humanism, Historicism, etc), wheeled about on the theoretical stage like heavy armoury. The conflation of the (genuine) problem of 'empiricism' with an implicit denigration of any and every piece of 'empirical' analysis was wholly damaging. It led orthodox Althusserean disciples into absurd positions about the necessary 'empiricism' of all historical writing and the validity of Theory even if all its propositions proved empirically unfounded. These fully deserve Thompson's scorn. It also licensed a species of intellectual terrorism — in which, despite claims to 'scientific openness', the theoretical guillotine was wielded to dispatch any concept which had the temerity to stray from its appointed epistemological path. Good graduate students were unable to commit a single sentence to paper for fear of being impaled on one or another prong of the 'either/or' theoretical scissors. This 'vulgar Althussereanism' did much to disfigure and degrade Marxist intellectual debate.

NEVERTHELESS, there is a question as to whether this is *all* that the 'moment of Althusser' represented. 'Contradiction and Over-determination' in *For Marx* seems to me, by any standards, a seminal essay in Marxist theory on the critical issue of how to think the question of 'determination' in a non-reductive way. *Reading Capital* I regarded from the outset as deeply flawed by its structuralism, formalism and rationalism. The influential 'Ideological State Apparatuses' essay says important things in a murky zone of Marxist theory. But its functionalism stands out a mile (and was so criticised); the relation of its second half to Freud and Lacan is an exercise in sustained ambiguity. There are, however, things any Marxist intellectual *must* be informed by here. Not being religious, I never regarded 'working through' Althusser as a matter of belief, doubt or conversion. At the Centre for Cultural Studies — tainted, in Thompson's book, by the stain of 'Althussereanism' — we tried to establish, from the outset, such a stance of 'critical engagement'.

Unfortunately, Thompson's polemical mode does not permit such shadings and complexities. He is, of course, a master of the polemical mode. But this mode has distinct weaknesses. In its search for the telling condensation, it wilfully simplifies opposing positions and arguments. It deals with intellectual debate as a matter of 'choice' between God and the Devil. It erects, against the Althusserean galaxy of Errors, its own, equally composited folk-devils. Ultimately, this replaces one form of intellectual brutalism with another. It cannot provide that delicacy of distinction which serious intellectual debate always requires — something which Thompson, writing, say, about intellectual movements in the 1790s, would instantly acknowledge (indeed, polemically insists on). Isn't there, after all, a problem about the unconscious 'empiricism' in much history-writing? Aren't there real difficulties about the relation of 'theory' to 'practice'? Or between the 'logic of analysis' and the 'logic of history'? Thompson perfectly well knows that these exist. So too did Althusser. By failing to do justice to the problems which his adversary — however wrongly — addressed, Thompson ends up by not doing justice to himself.

Paradoxically, polemic also has the effect of obscuring certain real *convergences* between Thompson and Althusser. Both are concerned about the real tendencies towards reductionism and economism in orthodox Marxism. Both refute the mechanical subordination of 'superstructure' to 'base'. Althusser addressed this under the title of 'relative autonomy'. But this is also, unequivocally, the name of Thompson's own game. Both recognise the importance of Engels in posing this question to orthodox Marxism; both agree he failed to resolve it. Yet, because 'relative autonomy' is identified with Althussereanism, Thompson is driven by his polemic to play fast and loose with the concept: now assigning it to some ninth circle of damned concepts ('a kind of oratorical sauce to season our researches with'), now offering it a last-minute reprieve ('a hopeful talisman against reductionism'). This produces real theoretical fluctuations and incoherences in *The Poverty of Theory,* not recouped by such disingenuous concessions in the form of, 'Yes, yes, and perhaps all this is so . . .', which makes a mockery of serious intellectual argument.

The Poverty of Theory, however, stands or falls, not alone on the brilliance of its polemic, but on the cogency of its theoretical and political alternatives. On this score, too, there are serious questions which must be posed, even at the risk of placing oneself in the direct line of fire.

'Althussereanism' got itself into an indefensible position about History. But there are real problems with Thompson's alternative — the defence of this 'dialogue between model and evidence'. Whence do the 'models' arise? They cannot emerge spontaneously from the evidence, since they are what it is tested against. They are constructed by the historian but how? Marx observed that, while chemists have reagents and botanists microscopes, historians of society have only one 'instrument' — the procedure of abstraction But, to Thompson, this immediately smacks of 'theoreticism'. Since history presents itself as a complex 'lived' whole, any abstraction from it must be a reduction of the 'the evidence'. Yet, to say that historical 'facts' speak themselves is, indeed, 'empiricism' Again, Thompson knows this. But he frequently slips into advancing History as its own author, 'historical experience' as its own test of authenticity. Thus, he dismisses all those parts of Marx's *Capital* which are not 'historical' as bemused by 'Hegelianism' or the logical deductions of Political Economy. This is too high a price to pay for the 'hermeneutic circle'.

THE STATUS OF 'EXPERIENCE' and of 'History' is uncertain in *The Poverty of Theory*. Thompson sometimes advances an unproblematic, unified 'historical method' which unites *all* historians against the theoreticist enemy — an odd affirmation for a Marxist historian who has polemicised so effectively against his professional colleagues His 'History' does acquire the same absolutist status as Althusser's 'Theory'. On these grounds, he criticises Althusser's division of the historical process into distinct 'instances'

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and accuses him (incorrectly, I think) of ascribing some practices — the Law, for example — unproblematically to the 'superstructures'. Thompson's own work on 18th-century Law and Crime, he argues, shows that sometimes the Law was 'superstructural', securing the dominance of a dominant class; sometimes directly intricated with the economy; sometimes 'running free' of all determination. Still, Marxists cannot be satisfied with this posing of an endless series of random and contingent particularities. It must provide a framework which allows us to grasp together these contradictory functions of 18th-century Law. Otherwise, History really is judge and arbiter, endlessly correcting against any generalisation whatsoever.

Thompson has made himself the undisputed master of a history which recovers the lived historical experience of those classes which official History tended to banish from the record. But there is no way in which the category of 'experience' can be unproblematic for Marxism. All experience is penetrated by cultural and ideological categories. It cannot be simply 'read' for its true meaning: it must be interrogated for its complex interweaving of 'real' and ideological elements. Reductive Marxism did assume that class consciousness was synonymous with class position, so that the former could be read off against the latter. Thompson's historical work profoundly corrects against the economism latent in this position, restoring the centrality of culture to any account of historical transitions (though there is a question as to whether he has abandoned the notion of paradigmatic class consciousness). But the larger problem remains: how to combine, say, the Marxist analysis of class at the structural level (high level of abstraction) with the concrete histories of particular class formations (also an abstraction, though at a more concrete 'historicised' level). Simply to elevate 'conditions' into 'experience' is to dissolve the dialectic which is at the heart of the theory. History is *lived* as an indissoluble whole. It cannot be thought or analysed without the making of distinctions. Thompson's grudging response to this criticism — speaking, now, of *two* 'experiences' — experience I (conditions) and experience II (how conditions are appropriated in consciousness) — remains unsatisfactory; especially since the whole problem of Marxist *politics* depends on the *relation between* I and II, plus the recognition that, in a non-reductive Marxism, there is no 'necessary correspondence' between the two. (Just to tempt fate, this is the 'relative autonomy' of politics!) You cannot facilitate thinking the relationship between two things which are not the same, by designating them both under the same concept — 'experience'.

This may look like a 'theoretical' point: but it is one place where theory has clear political consequences. The problem of Marxist politics lies precisely in that non-correspondence between (to give them their old names) 'class-in-itself' and 'class-for-itself'. But if both are dissolved into the catch-all category of 'experience', then this implies — despite all the complexities of any particular analysis — that 'the class' is always *really* in its place, at the ready, and can be summoned up 'for socialism'. The history of socialism in Britain in the last century, unfortunately, suggests no such thing. Yet it remains a sort of unstated premise of a great deal of socialist thinking— the source of one kind of socialist 'populism'. THE NOTION of 'people's history' in History Workshop sometimes tends in this direction — as if, simply to tell the story of past oppressions and struggles is to find the promise of socialism already there, fully constituted, only waiting to 'speak out'. It is sometimes also present in Thompson's eloquent invocation of the 'free-born Englishman' and his traditions, which live on, untouched by reformism, Labourism, the collapse of social democracy and the rise of a virulent Thatcherite populism, and can be summoned on to the political stage at will. A politics marked by the influence of Althusser, but even more by Gramsci, has also, in recent years, returned to the strategic ground of the *popular* basis of the struggle for socialism. But it sees this as a political exercise very different in kind and strategy from an earlier kind of 'populism'.

In general, I think *The Poverty of Theory*, despite its magisterial polemic, its correct engagement with 'vulgar Althussereanism', its socialist passion and the rich historical imagination which informs it, does, in the end, evade these difficult issues both of theory *and* politics. Humanism and the 'agenda of 1956' require defence against their idiot detractors — as many sectarians of yesterday are slowly beginning to realise. But they cannot be simply moved back into place in 1980. For one thing, between them and us lies another complex 'moment' — the moment of 1968 and all that. This is a contradictory inheritance, requiring neither simple rejection not wholeheartedly acceptance but critical analysis. For good and ill, it has inflected every element out of which a 'politics for 1980' will have to be constructed. Thompson's commitment to '1956', and his brutal dismissal of everything which has happened, politically and theoretically, since — the product of the 'lumpen-intelligentsia doing its own thing' — is a striking blindness in so sophisticated and subtle a historian. The attempt to bury, not only the worst excesses of 'Althussereanism', but also the real theoretical gains made in the interval, arises from the same over-hasty, ill-tempered reaction. It has made a very profound mark. It is questionable whether it does the current struggle much service.

John Berger

Before Birds Sing

The darkness of night is
far from the living
as granite
5:00 am. November

On the panes
minus fifteen grows
flowers of ice
5:00 am. December

The morning stove is dead and
silent as the wood
of the frozen trees
5:00 am. January

On waking sleep solicits
another visit
to her summers
5:00 am. February

Declining he farts
lights the fire goes out
with his churn
5:30 am.

Rick Rogers

Sheep-and-Goat Exercises

Outcomes of Education edited by Tyrrell Burgess & Elizabeth Adams *Macmillan Educational* £9.95

An educational scheme that costs the nation £30 million a year, fails to deliver for half its clients and misrepresents many of the rest ought to be a candidate for the chopper. Instead, successive governments (and this one in particular) have insisted on pumping yet more time, cash and importance into the scheme. That's the state of the public exam system of GCEs and CSEs that operates in all the country's secondary schools.

It doesn't work and, say Tyrrell Burgess and Elizabeth Adams, it is anti-educational. It warps children and it warps schools, geared as so many of them are to producing good examinees university-style rather than useful, well-adjusted, communicative and imaginative citizens. It's also, of course, a neat form of social control. There's no GCE in Initiative, chums. So what's the alternative?

For Burgess/Adams and the other 12 contributors to *Outcome,* it is a serious recording of the outcomes of education for every child at the end of the compulsory schooling. Those outcomes are 'the competencies, attributes, interests and purposes with which he or she faces the problems and opportunities of adult life'.

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There are three reasons put forward for some kind of certification for 16-year-olds — as a means of selection or assessment for yet more education or for jobs; as a motivation for students; as a way of controlling standards within and between schools. The book is suitably rude about the capacity of the conventional exam system to do these tasks properly ('exclusive, trivial, uninformative, expensive, misused'). But the educational establishment (neatly shot away in the book's introduction by two barrels of an enlightened establishment-man, John Tomlinson Cheshire education chief *and* Schools Council chairman) persists in regarding the system as a useful sheep-and-goats exercise. Do they *really* want sheep? For employers (and many parents too alas) it is a talent contest — that wastes more than it spots.

The *Outcomes* contributors don't just argue against exams; they build up a viable alternative to them. The book documents a series of experiments — with varying degrees of success — to outmanoeuvre the system and provide school leavers with a more coherent and accurate certified assessment of their skills and character.

The experiments have come primarily from the schools that actually experience that exam-warp effect on curriculum and children. For example, the Sutton Centre — a community school in Nottinghamshire — operates a dual system of continuous assessment: CSE mode three exams (where the teachers are largely in control of syllabus and assessment) and a profile pack for each student compiled through a school life by student, teacher and parent as a joint venture. The object is to encourage students 'to think about and learn from their own actions, to become attuned to adult criticism and to respond to it, and to undertake extensive writing'.

The profile idea has been put through a number of variations — the Totnes Record of Personal Achievement; the Scottish Council for Research in Education's profile scheme, linked partly to computer and with greater teacher input than students. The book also looks at similar schemes based on primary schools and higher education institutes, notably the School for Independent Study at the North East London Polytechnic.

Many continental countries are already well down the Burgess/Adams path; Britain in comparison has hardly begun to pack an overnight bag. Sweden (naturally) is heading towards a total system of continuous assessment. It's Commission on Marking has recommended the abolition of marks — and presumably of itself too. Pupil profiles are used extensively throughout Europe. Overhauling ways of assessing children is in progress in most continental countries. The solutions differ, but the general trend — outlined in Guy Neave's chapter — is towards the record card or profile as a substitute to a one-off national exam system (as in the Scandinavian countries) or alongside exams (as in France).

Having demolished the British exam system at the start of the book, Burgess and Adams return at the end to set down their proposals for a new framework for assessment that can be given a national currency. At 14, a student would begin to compile a detailed statement of current skills, attributes and interests, together with a summary of how s/he would like to fill the next two years' schooling up to 16. ('Where would I like to be in two years' time? What skills do I want to develop?') All this would be done in consultation with teachers and parents. Between 14 and 16, a student would compile a folder of his or her work and achievements. Any exams taken would be described and recorded, although no folder would contain merely a list of exam grades. At 16, a second statement is prepared similar to the first — but two years on and with the evidence at hand in the folder. Such a scheme, say Burgess/Adams, could be both validated and accredited to give each scheme adopted by a school or group of schools a national legitimacy. No good having a certificate no-one recognises outside the school gates.

An external but locally-based validation board — of governors, employers, trade unionists, further education staff — could review the process whereby students plan their programme of work at 14. An internal (school-based) accreditation board of teachers and governors from local schools could confirm that the statements made at 16 matched the folder's evidence.

Burgess and Adams see this as only a framework within which teachers and students can work out together a variety of solutions for meeting 'each other's needs and the needs of society'. Moreover, they see it as an 'educational' way of meeting those three criteria of certification — selection, motivation and establishing yardsticks.

It is worth recording that even the state of Victoria in Australia — an area not covered in this book — has an assessment scheme called the Secondary Tertiary Certificate. This allows student involvement in curriculum planning and assessment and offers a non-competitive, descriptive approach to assessment. It has won wide acceptance among parents, employers and the majority of the state's universities.

And that is one of the questions left unanswered by *Outcomes* — how to make the transition here from small-scale experiments to a nationally approved set of schemes and how to take parents, employers and sceptical educationalists along with you. For there are no detailed instructions on how to prise open the numbing grip of the GCE/university-oriented educational mafia around the throat of the British school system. Nor on how to sidestep the neanderthal groping by government towards reform.

A second worry is how to avoid the danger of creating, albeit unintentionally, a two-tier system where the more academic children take the exams, and others get the profiles. These criticisms aside, *Outcomes* is an essential educational handbook for the 21st century

John Coleman

Promises, Promises

Cinema: a Critical Dictionary: The Major Film-Makers edited by Richard Roud *Secker* 2 vols £25 the set

The American editor of this monumental undertaking has impressive if idiosyncratic credentials: author of books on Godard and Straub, Director of the New York Film Festival, roving Arts Critic for the *Guardian* (from 1963-70, its movie reviewer), regular contributor to *Sight and Sound,* ex-programme director of the NFT, he has remained an enthusiast for cinema while candidly admitting his 'blind spots' — Eisenstein, Murnau, Mizoguchi, Rossellini and Bergman. His introduction is a model of lucidity. He is wary of systematic criticism, whether Marxist/materialist, structuralist, semiological or psychological. 'Taste cannot be taught: semiology can.' But his 42 chosen writers (preponderantly British, American and French; and together responsible for the 234 entries) cover 'most of the critical schools'. So far, so good. And the jacket promises articles from Andrew Sarris, Penelope Houston, Henri Langlois, Arlene Croce, John Russell Taylor and Gavin Millar. Better and better. Yet wait a minute. If we except JTR's, the combined contributions of those enticing names add up to just 18: Robin Wood, unheralded on the blurb, has as many all to himself, with Roud the runner-up.

But, then, the editor is otherwise omnipresent. 'Given the nature of the work, and the nature of writers, the genesis of this Dictionary has been long,' he explains (it was announced for publication in 1978) and, with many of the entries on active directors breaking off around '70-'71, he has been obliged to update them, occasionally producing bold-type addenda as long as the commissioned pieces. Inevitably, he is often at odds witl what has gone before; less predictably, he no infrequently has to come quite to the rescue o some mishandled director. The culprits tend t be Paris-based: Noël Burch waffling on abou Marcel Hanoun (*'major'*?) while omitting t give the plot of *Une Simple Histoire;* Claud Ollier on Sternberg without a mention o Dietrich; and the ineffable Jean-André Fiesch (with 14 of the 40 French entries) necessitatin a long Roud *preface* to his 'perversel brilliant' (RR), abysmally uninformative essa on Straub. These interventions are somethin other than the invigorating cut-and-thrust c debate; they are there because someone ha failed to do his job.

The responsibility for these last-ditc retrievals is, of course, the editor's. Well an good to let in a spectrum of critical practice but Roud should surely have insisted on tw things: that the word 'critical' was paramoun and that it would be no bad idea to have som manner of uniformity in the presentation of a least minimal biographical and filmographica details. In too many cases, we find ourselve *in medias res,* with key-films ignored and the creator's dates and background a mystery The grave and painstaking Robin Wood Altman, for instance, exists in a vacuum. Th assumption would seem to be that the reade eager only for blazing insights, can alwa look up *facts* and stuff in a reference boo For 25 quid, this reader expects essential da to be incorporated, part of the deal.

Then there is the further matter of *whic* directors are to be included and — amor these — which are to receive the full trea ment. One accepts Roud's faintly flash ar gleeful choice of Kramer, Robert ov Kramer, Stanley. Stretching a point, one m even allow Carol Reed and David Lean to

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treated in the same entry, even if Mr Taylor's first sentence ('Though, even superficially, they are not very alike ...') is hardly supportive. British cinema in general — and who am I to protest? — is skimpily done by, with excellent David Wilson on the 'British Documentary Movement' (and that embraces Humphrey Jennings) rationed to a page-and-a-half. Elsewhere, John Schlesinger, Thorold Dickinson and Nicolas Roeg might never have lived. No, protest I must when Michael Snow's achingly null *Wavelength* gets more than three pages under 'American Avant-Garde Cinema' plus a separate entry by Jonathan Rosenbaum.

> Within both the delimited confines of the 'structural film' (as such) and the cinema today as a whole, his films assume an importance so awesome in its ultimate implications that whole schools of contemporary film-making pale beside it.

This is 'critical'! *Snow* a 'major' film-maker?

Joris Ivens receives three words ('Joris Ivens', 'Ivens'); Andrzej Wajda is summarily disposed of, along with Munk and others, under 'Polish Cinema Since the War', as are Alain Tanner and Claude Goretta under 'Swiss Cinema' (Roud has berated the 'Meanwhile, in Bulgaria ...' approach in his intro); a disgracefully brisk 'American Cinema of the 70s' accommodates Bogdanovich, Coppola, Lucas, Carpenter, Malick, Spielberg, De Palma, Scorsese and an RR tailpiece dismissing Woody Allen. The editor has announced his cut-off date as 1975, but he goes beyond it when it suits him: there is no excuse there.

That there *are* fine, clear, informative, suggestive, provocative, intelligent and useful articles, criticism at its best, on truly major filmmakers (and good minor ones) should go without saying. Among these I would single out Richard Corliss on Flaherty and 'American Screenwriters', Elliott Stein on Capra, James Monaco on Truffaut, Miss Houston on Hitchcock, Sturges and Welles, Gavin Millar (the best British film reviewer now writing) on Vigo, Wilder and Olmi, and Andrew Sarris on Chaplin — 'All in all, Chaplin's tramp gets off quite a few stops before the Finland Station'. Roud himself is in top form on Renoir's work up to 1939 and pretty near it on Bresson. It may be an impertinence, but one conceives of this ambitious compendium as having become a nightmarish task to control and assemble. Even the 230-odd stills leave something to be desired both in their relevance and their reproduction. There's little confidence in a caption to Walter Huston and Mary Astor in *Dodsworth:* 'you couldn't tell from this still, but this may well be Wyler's finest film'. As for the text, one winces at the unhappy contiguity of hard-won, reasoned pieces with so much dross.

John Mole
Love

This is a word intact. The century
Has smuggled it into our keeping.
We have built it a shelter
Among ashes, marked with a cross.

How it survived its passport
Baffles us. We ask no
Questions. We suffer its hurt look.
It deserves peace.

Gently between our joined hands
It pulses, gently becomes
The light of our gaze across a landscape
At the cold dust endlessly rising.

James Campbell
Front Lawn

Problems by JOHN UPDIKE *Deutsch* £5.95.

In an author's prefatory note, John Updike refers to 'the sad curve of time' which his new book subtends. Sure enough, the 23 stories in *Problems* are inhabited by a sad lot of people. It would seem that no Updike hero can keep his wife, that all parents have exquisitely painful relationships with their children (who are always at various 'difficult' stages); bedding a new wife or mistress or pick-up affords the only respite from the bulldozing pressure of paternity suits, school fees and erstwhile family claims which threatens at all other times to destroy that last remaining copher of dignity, the ability to love.

There can be no question but that John Updike is a writer of stature. If anything his short stories are better than his novels, since he excels in showing how people can be changed within the space of an afternoon or even a few minutes. His prose gleams. He is never sentimental about his poor characters and yet you cannot understand the insides of men and women as he does and fail to love them. So imtimately does he know the operations of a vexed mind — the bluffs, the self-deceptions, the disguised selfishness — that the reader is forced at times to repeat what Orwell said of Henry Miller: 'He knows all about me'.

Yet there is a dimension missing from his work; for all his ability to portray the small death which is integral to the short story, Updike's work lacks the tragic dimension. His stage is suburban and his tragedy is a domestic one. This is the territory he has marked off and it is difficult to imagine anyone writing about it better than he does. But such a narrow focus, though expertly directed, is bound to present a contracted picture. For all their problems and pain, these muddled characters are unable to achieve the stature which would allow them to be seen as tragic. We look in the place which is reserved in most major writers' work for tragedy and find there only pathos. The catharsis never happens. Nobody dies in Updike's world, nor do they ever make a clean break from the mess they were in to start over again; instead they get divorced and make a similarly unhappy remarriage; or they become impotent, or lose their kids to an estranged wife and her lover. They seem only to be concerned with whatever encroaches on the front lawn: the evils of Vietnam exist on the other side of a television screen and anyway are punctuated reassuringly by commercials. The all-American search for identity has shrunk to an endless round of 'single, married, separated or divorced? (the question asked by one guest of another at a party; the answer is, 'All of them. But not all at once.')

The centre of this 'sad time' has been *'Me'*:

> as if to advertise that her breasts had survived two Asian wars, six Presidents, five recessions, and four children, the class secretary was wearing a deeply décolleté bodice of lemon chiffon, in the Fifties' strapless style.

The sad scramble for security is itself part of an effort to stave off the tragic sense — without which, even the corniest love story acknowledges, one can never grow up.

It is part of Updike's intention to show how some of his characters do grow in spite of all this, however. 'That must be the difference between soulless creatures and human beings,' observes a man whose daughter has gone to live with her lover: 'creatures find every dawn as remarkable as all the ones previous, whereas the soul grows calluses.' In what is surely the book's best story, 'The Gun Shop', a father is shocked, and relieved, to confess that his love for his son has grown so large as to have become something fearful: 'You're killing me!' he blurts out. Mostly the scramble for somewhere to lie down in the world leads the characters to look in all the wrong places. In another of the better stories, 'Domestic Life in America,' (it sometimes seems that all Updike stories are called that) a separated husband, paying his family a visit, is browsing through a volume of Yeats:

> '"The centre cannot hold,"' Fraser quoted. '"Mere" — ten points.'
> "Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,"' she completed.

As so often, the intimacy with which the author conveys this play is touching and engaging, and yet it is their misfortune to reduce Yeats's vision to a family game: familiarity with 'The Second Coming' gets you not an increased means to examine life and yourself, but ten points. In 'Transaction' a man happily and permanently accepts a demystified sex — 'death' — from a prostitute, congratulating himself on being able to see through it at last; in 'The Faint' another man marries 'his doll' because she looks so beautiful in a faint she has brought on to avoid going into the second half of a play he has dragged her out to; two lovers allow their analysts — 'The Fairy Godfathers' — to

Robert Katz
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GRANADA

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vanish, 'taking with them the lovers' best selves'. Life is a game being played out on a board with squares marked 'single, married, separated or divorced'.

Nothing 'holds' in Updike's sad place and time but a sense of where one stands on the board, and even that may sink without notice. 'A guy I once knew, between Rodney and you, was a frogman . . .', the second Mrs Farnham begins a conversation with her second husband. The story — and the book — ends with Farnham praying: 'O rise, frogman, smoothly and without panic, up from the depths; . . . brings us news of sunk Atlantises, our fabled pasts. Keep us in touch.' Updike has many stories (involving the Maples and Henry Bech) which remain uncollected; by the time they are brought together you can bet that Farnham, like Rodney and the frogman, will have been displaced.

Francis Wheen

Power without Glory

The Prerogative of the Harlot: Press Barons Power by HUGH CUDLIPP *Bodley Head* £8.50.

Northcliffe wrote in 1917 that 'I believe the independent newspaper to be one of the future forms of government.' In this book Lord Cudlipp hopes to show that the word 'future' was unnecessary: he examines the careers of five press barons (Hearst, Northcliffe, Rothermere, Henry Luce and Beaverbrook) and concludes that they were unhealthily and irresponsibly powerful.

So what? Has this not been said before? Indeed it has, and it has often been better put. Moreover Cudlipp's desire to cram five biographies into a volume of 300 pages has prevented him from giving more than a brisk account of the highlights of each man's career. Most of the material is familiar, with the exception of the chapter on Rothermere, whose life has hitherto been surprisingly underchronicled: Cudlipp deserves much gratitude for his diligence here. Nevertheless the question remains: What can he possibly achieve in a book such as this? His own answer is that

> 'the object of this book is to trace the origin of [the press barons'] power, analyse their personalities and motives, and investigate their policies and political machinations where any national or international significance was apparent.

Within this brief the book is a limited success. Cudlipp is at his best when he takes one or two 'campaigns' waged by each of his subjects, explains how the power of the press was abused and leaves one in little doubt as to the downright wickedness which often inspired these men. We are given a fast-moving account of Hearst's disgraceful part in starting the Spanish American war. (Hearst's illustrator, Frederick Remington, cabled to the New York *Journal* from Havana: 'Everything is quiet. There is no trouble here. There will be no war. I wish to return. Remington.' Hearst replied: 'Please remain. You finish the pictures and I'll furnish the war.' And he did.) We are also shown how Northcliffe set out systematically to destroy Lord Haldane, how Rothermere tried to hoodwink his readers into accepting fascism ('Hurrah for the blackshirts!'), how Luce became so blindly devoted to Chiang Kai-Shek that he would not print the truth about what was happening in China, how Beaverbrook wilfully misled his readers about the abdication and about Hitler's intentions ('THE DAILY EXPRESS DECLARES THAT BRITAIN WILL NOT BE INVOLVED IN A EUROPEAN WAR THIS YEAR OR NEXT YEAR EITHER' was his front page headline on 30 September 1938.) In all these passages Cudlipp's strong moral tone is uplifting. And, in the best sentence in the book, Cudlipp demolishes Beaverbrook's crusade for Empire Free Trade:

> Apart from Canada, Beaverbrook did not visit a single Dominion or Colony except Jamaica in his eighty-five years; he merited no more attention than a bearded nut in Trafalgar Square carrying a placard proclaiming that 'Judgement is Nigh', but he owned newspapers.

The words '... but he owned newspapers' could usefully be inscribed on the gravestones of all Cudlipp's five subjects.

Cudlipp has written a lively book: why do I find it unsatisfactory? Partly because he is no historian, and his accounts of 20th century events are thus tiresomely over-simplified. A more serious flaw is the narrowness of his remit. He tells us of the press barons' irresponsibility to government and politicians — for instance, Rothermere's preposterous refusal to support Baldwin in the *Mail* 'unless I am acquainted with the names of at least eight, or ten, of his most prominent colleagues in the next ministry' — but he says nothing about their equally damaging behaviour towards their own newspapers, behaviour which put Fleet Street into its present mess. A serious study of 'power without responsibility' in press barons should not simply ignore the structure of ownership and management which allowed a few men to exercise such power through their newspapers.

There is also something faintly irritating about Cudlipp's style. It's breezy, to be sure, but his metaphors are like Ronald Reagan, pouring hair dye over themselves in an unsuccessful attempt to hide their decrepitude. Of a meeting with Beaverbrook Cudlipp writes

> The prophet was casting his spell on a newcomer half his age. He was administering a mute oath of allegiance. Or was Mephistopheles promising to show Dr Faustus all knowledge and all experience in return for his immortal soul? Or was it a ritualistic absolution from my sins of the past when, in some unthinking moment, I had doubted his dictum of Empire Free Trade?

There are occasional illiteracies:

> Beaverbrook deplored that neither Baldwin's Tories nor MacDonald's Socialists hardly mentioned the Empire in the election.

Despite its limitations, the book will serve as a useful introductory text for people who wish to 'get up' the press barons in a short time. Anyone who wishes to acquire a serious understanding of modern newspapers should take their custom elsewhere.

Kevin Porter

Ways around Holes

Even in the gloom you persisted. I may
have surrendered my principle
to your energy, but I questioned
the rose in your mouth, which was pink.

I like it in the mountains, air so fresh.
It pleases me that you can visit so many times
a year; I wait long for the sound of you
engine. The smell of petrol.

So often, when we waded in a stream
I would have touched your hand,
but I feared you might laugh. Quietly
walking back we saw beast mount beast.

This is my home. I rise late
to avoid the demon crawling down.
He caught me awake once, I avoided
the blood on his yellow claw.

You are right if you see a crimson blotch
by the trap-door, when you clamber back.
You are always so difficult to comprehend, y
even with my eyes tight I recognise
the cackle in your laugh.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Spurling

Time & the Showman

Salvador Dali *Tate*
Nigel Hall *Warwick Gallery, 33 Warwick Square, London SW1*

'You have here', wrote George Orwell, 'a direct, unmistakable assault on sanity and decency. . . Dali is a good draughtsman and a disgusting human being.' Osbert Lancaster, reviewing a Dali exhibition in 1951, thought rather less of his draughtsmanship:

> While Dali can just hold his own with the minor master of the Victorian Academy, alongside even such small-scale giants as Tiepolo or Luca Giordano he makes a poor showing. . . he emerges as the Lord Leighton of Sunset Boulevard.

The ingredients of Dali's immense popular success are summed up in these two raspberries: shocking, newsworthy subject-matter combined with an academic, illusionistic style of the kind rejected by most serious 20th-century artists and still sorely missed by the customers. No-one feels himself capable either of having Dali's ideas or of rendering them with the same skill, therefore he is to be marvelled at. This of course is also Dali's own view of the matter and leads him to conclude that he is a king among men and a genius among artists.

Those critics and art historians who defend Dali or who, like the Tate's Simon Wilson, consider him 'one of the giants of 20th-century art', do so on more or less the same grounds: he made Freud's Unconscious visible and his style was an entirely new amalgam of 19th-century illusionism with cubist and abstract elements which was uniquely suited to the task. Practically everyone, then, agrees on what is there; the only question is what value is to be assigned to it. The Tate's exhibition (previously at the Beauborg), the largest collection of Dali's work ever assembled, should provide the answer.

As it turns out, the show could have been a quarter the size and still given the same answer. Dali's mature work is probably as well known from reproductions as Leonardo's or Van Gogh's, so that the first room, containing his early pre-surrealist work — a medley of tributes to cubism, pointillism, expressionism, pre-raphaelitism, Ingres, Friedrich and above all Picasso — is inevitably of special interest. Thereafter, room after room proclaims the same message: Dali has dated. His old nightmares, the melting watches, the ants and the grasshoppers have come home to roost. Time has fed on his shocking subject-matter and reduced it to dusty symbols which would not assault your old granny's sanity or decency, let alone George Orwell's. The exception perhaps are the small erotic drawings of 1931-3 in the second room, which have a certain *fin-de-siècle* naughtiness of the Beardsley kind, without a trace of Beardsley's elegance or wit, though concerned like his with frustration rather than fulfilment. But to think of Beardsley is to be made still more aware of the essential innocence, not to say rusticity, of the images Dali uses in his paintings. If these are the workings of the great Unconscious made manifest, then the great Unconscious is a child from the sticks, its terrors and desires as innocuous and unsatisfactory to the adult mind as those of Marlowe's Dr Faustus.

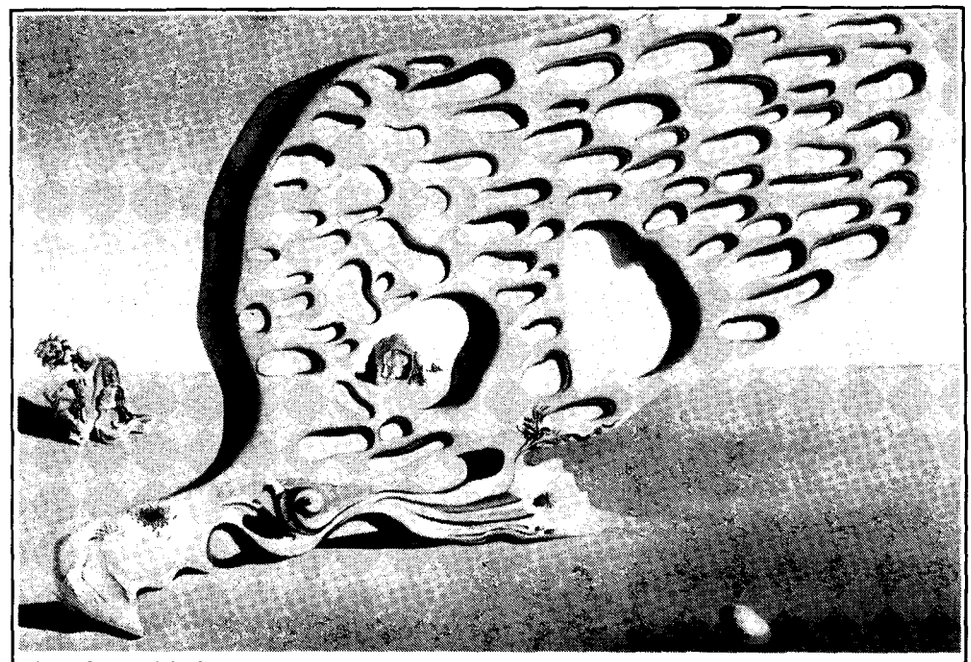
But of course all that about the Unconscious and the so-called 'paranoiac-critical' method of tapping it and exploiting it in visual form is so much Dalian eyewash. According to Andy Warhol in his recent book of photographs of the New York jet-set (*Exposures*, Hutchinson £8.95):

> Dali likes to talk about sex a lot. . . I never know what he's talking about, but every so often I recognise the word 'masturbation' because it sounds the same in every language. I think he thinks that masturbation has something to do with art.

Dali had read his Freud and fallen under its spell at a fairly early stage, but the figures and objects in his paintings are for the most part perfectly conscious masturbatory images, combined with various pet childhood horrors of his own (e.g. ants and grasshoppers, but surprisingly not spiders) and set in the rock and sand landscape of his native Catalonia. Nothing wrong with that, surely? No, provided you don't attribute to it mysterious powers it doesn't possess. Dali's subject-matter, even if it once seemed new and shocking, cannot now, *per se*, give value to his paintings. Everything depends on what he does with it.

Unfortunately he has never felt it necessary to do very much. He was clearly as impressed with the insanity and indecency of his imagination as anyone else and for him it was enough to display what excited him in all its glossy three-dimensionality, as it was once enough for Landseer to display his stags or Alma-Tadema his Roman ladies. The method of display is theatrical rather than painterly — the canvas converted into the set for a melodrama, complete with flats, perspective and sky-cloth, a lurid light and a vaguely sinister atmosphere. But whereas De Chirico's 'sets' contrive to suggest action by its very absence and Burra's contain human actors engaged in some collective ritual, Dali's merely house a random collection of exhibits which are not in themselves or among themselves active. Like the items in a sex-shop they draw such life as they have from the complicity and recognition of the observer. For all his skill as a draughtsman (he is better than Osbert Lancaster allows), Dali's notion of composition hardly goes beyond shop-window-fitting; and his main formula for activating a scene is, like Arcimboldi (who delighted the court of Maximilian II by painting portraits out of arrangements of fruit, flowers, animals and vegetables), to play tricks with his own skill, to make a face out of a fruit-dish, a fish out of a lake or to metamorphose a rock into Narcissus and Narcissus into a giant hand holding an egg.

Nevertheless, although Dali was infected almost from the beginning by his own propaganda, wasting his gift on superficial virtuosity, confusing the anti-rational with the irrational or even the profound, preferring to shock the bourgeois than to surprise himself, he has produced memorable inventions: the soft watches, the lobster telephone, the Mae West sofa, the head with its tadpole tail of a body in *Sleep*, the cypress-tree gushing water into the desert. Most of them date from his late twenties or early thirties, and they are powerful enough to make one wonder all over again if one hasn't dismissed a genius too lightly. Perhaps so. Yet the accumulated evidence is there, evidence of incessant posturing over triviality and emptiness, culminating in the unspeakable kitsch crucifixions and wife-apotheoses of the post-war period. Dali was certainly a prodigy, may have been a genius *manqué*, but he dismissed himself.



The enigma of desire

IT IS A RELIEF to leave the Tate for the new Warwick Gallery in nearby Pimlico. Nigel Hall's sculpture of the last ten years has been of an extreme ascetism: geometrical structures

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made out of thin metal rods and floating off walls like angular spiders' webs. The exhibition, a model of its kind both for layout and for its helpful catalogue, traces Hall's development from the rather gnomish fibreglass concoctions (based on the floor) of the mid-Sixties up to his latest wall-pieces.

There is also an extremely good selection of drawings, beginning with Hockney-like figures in interiors and ending with complex geometrical progressions in white and grey on deep plack charcoal grounds. The link throughout is landscape, the tenuous and the weighty, the seen and the unseen, the shifts of space and outline, scale and proportion caused by the movement of the observer and the ambiguities of distance. After the torrid inertia of Dali's peep-show landscapes it is like a dream of flying.

Among this week's contributors:

MICHAEL SCHMIDT is a Director of Carcanet and lectures on poetry at the University of Manchester. He is well-known as poet, critic and broadcaster, and edits the *P.N. Review*. His novel, *The Colonist*, (Muller), came out last month.

STUART HALL is Professor of Sociology at the Open University. An extended version of his paper is to be published later this year in a History Workshop collection.

JAMES CAMPBELL is the editor of the *New Edinburgh Review*.

RICK ROGERS's book on government reports on children will be published in September by Heinemann Educational.

SEAN HIGNETT, author of *A Picture to Hang on the Wall* (1966), is preparing a dramatised life of Andrew Carnegie for BBC TV and writing a biography of Dorothy Brett.

Theatre 1

Sean Hignett

Knee to the Groin

SUS by BARRY O'KEEFE *7:84 Theatre Company England, McLellan Galleries, Glasgow*

Election night, 1979. Two policemen, Detective Inspector Karn (Stewart Preston) and his assistant, Detective Constable Wilby (Mervyn Stutter), are in a room in a South London police station. Sparsely furnished, without even a poster pointing the way to the nearest VD clinic, just two chairs facing each other across a Formica-topped table and a wall-phone through which filter the election results, it is the interrogation room. Karn — Scottish, married, nervously insecure, over-excited at the probability of a Thatcher victory and the heralding of what he calls the New Dawn for law and order — bets on the Tory majority with Wilby. Wilby, a Londoner, single, taciturn hard man, puzzlingly accepts the bet. Is he a Labour voter or does he just take orders from his boss?

Whether from first night nerves at the start of 7:84 England's barn-storming Scottish tour in conjunction with the Campaign to Stop the Scottish Criminal Justice Bill, or whether it is just hard to believe that policemen continue their role-playing towards each other in private, it was an uneasy opening. But, with the entry of Delroy (Gordon Case), a young black man, picked up on 'sus' and offering Karn and Wilby someone to rub off against, Barry O'Keefe's play moved rapidly into its electrical stride.

Delroy is no tearaway teenager but a married man, three kids and a fourth on the way, out of work, been down at the club with his mates for the evening. Wilby and Karn fall into their hard and soft centre performances. Wilby stands silently stock-still, the only thing that has ever moved him was the time when a demonstrator, fleeing from Wilby's police dog, jammed the alsatian's jaw in a doorway Karn, sitting picking at the election forecasts in the newspaper, cajoles Delroy, taunts him with fantasies of having to choose between ITN and BBC in the form of Anna Ford and Angela Rippon lying naked and inviting, jokes with him, and Delroy is cheeky enough back He's been picked up on 'sus' before, just one of the crosses he has learnt to bear and maybe this time they could get it over quickly without all the thrust and parry, without all the introductory patter so he can get back home But Karn's jokes are the jibes of a schoolmaster who needs and has a captive juvenile audience — laugh or I'll keep you in when the bell goes, smile while I twist your ear off. Delroy is the classroom fall-guy, unable to resist the smart retort, unwilling to yes-sir no-sir, three-bags-full-sir.

By the end of the first act, the comedy chillingly evaporates. Concerned for his wife who is unwell in bed, he tires of the foreplay and having been offered no reason for his detention, decides to leave. Karn and Wilby make no attempt to stop him. Confused and unbelieving, Delroy stands in the doorway as in a scene of horrifying callousness, Wilby tip onto the table a pink nightdress that Delroy has already been led into describing his wife a wearing. The nightdress is covered in bloodstains. Delroy's wife has been found dead and he is under 'sus'.

June Arts Guide

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Inevitably, but no less gripping for that, by the end of the second act Karn is leaving Wilby to complete the interrogation with a knee to the groin and a boot to the stomach; the third act produces the post-mortem report showing that Delroy's wife died of natural causes, a rare complication in the womb causing a spontaneous and fatal abortion. She just burst. Karn reverts to his smiling, cajoling ways, Delroy must play the white man, just a little misunderstanding, sorry we kept you. And if Delroy doesn't wait to cooperate, then the reason he has been here all night is 'sus' — there were, after all, a spate of break-ins reported in the area last night.

With Glasgow last Friday the hottest place in Europe and the heating in the McLellan Galleries going contrarily full-blast, the heat of the night only added to the sweating claustrophobia of the play. The few stodgy moments were imported with the sub-plot — the regular interruption of the action while Karn gets the latest election results on the telephone. Such a keen interest would have had a transistor blaring away, full-time, interrogation or not but Karn's attitudes and interests are clear enough without that heavy underlining.

A timeless today, despite the fact that the setting was Brixton rather than Bailliehouse, might have better pointed the link with the Stop the Bill Campaign. Nevertheless, the preciseness of the target — the detention clauses in the proposed bill — and the immediacy of the problem — make this present week's tour almost the ideal circumstance for 7:84's commitment to political theatre.

The present tour finishes with performances in Cumbernauld and in the George Square Theatre, Edinburgh. As in Glasgow, a panel of guest speakers, representing the diversity of interest against the bill, will follow the performance.

Theatre 2

Benedict Nightingale

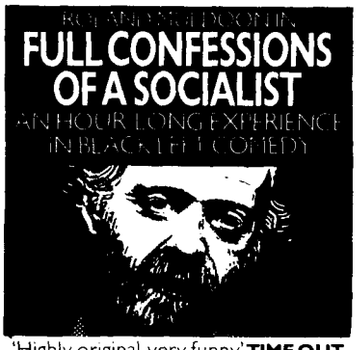
Violent Repentance

The Maid's Tragedy by BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER *Other Place, Stratford*
Julius Caeasr by SHAKESPEARE *Riverside Studios*
Qantrill in Lawrence by BERNARD POMERANCE *ICA*
Seduced by SAM SHEPARD *Theatre Upstairs*
Motherdear by ROYCE RYTON *Ambassadors*
Murieta by PABLO NERUDA *Old Vic*
Faustus by HANNS EISLER *Old Vic*

'Are these the joys of marriage?' memorably gulps Rob Edwards's Amintor at the Other Place, provoking not-unsympathetic titters from the audience. Well may he ask. He has won himself a succulent bride in Sinead Cusack's Evadne; and now here she is, bang beside the double-bed, declaring not simply that she'll never have sex with him, but that she'd rather spend the night in a snakepit. He tries a little textbook understanding, the sort a 17th-century marriage guidance counsellor might recommend, but it's no good. Not only does she proclaim herself morally beyond the Jacobean pale — 'a maidenhead? What, at *my* age?' — she reveals that she's still actively and enthusiastically the royal mistress. Poor Amintor suddenly twigs. So *that* was why the King was so infinitely obliging when it came to arrange the match.

This is a terrific scene, played with slowly rising bile by Mr Edwards, and by Miss Cusack with a serene sexual contempt, self-satisfied and surpassingly cruel; and there are others of near-equal excitement to come. Altogether, *The Maid's Tragedy* proves itself so well worth reviving that it seems mean-minded to make any objections at all. But there's no denying that it sometimes slips into period fatuity, notably in the scene when the fiancée Amintor has unwisely rejected for Evadne comes, camouflaged as a man, to bait him into killing her. Moreover, Miss Cusack is asked to make an emotional transition that seems awesome even by the standards of an age much abler than our own to tolerate sudden switches of behaviour. One moment, she is the marital prickteaser triumphant; the next, she is having the fear of God put into her by Amintor's bosom friend and her brother, Tom Wilkinson's sturdy, dangerous Melantius; and the very next she's in in the King's bedroom with cords he assumes to be from the local sex-shop ('What pretty new device is this?') and stabbing to death his pinioned torso. Miss Cusack does much to explain this violent repentance, gasping, sobbing, frantically quaking as Mr Wilkinson gooses her with his dagger; but she really needs to go still further, and have a nervous breakdown, there, on the stage. And that the script scarcely gives her time and space to do.

Barry Kyle, who directs, garbs the cast in clothes that look Edwardian-Ruritanian at first, but gradually become more modern as the play proceeds, culminating in the entry of the aggrieved fiancée as an urban terrorist, complete with woolly helmet and karate-kicks. Peter Gill, the Stafford Cripps of our theatre, solves the eternal costume-question with greater austerity at Riverside. All except Robert Flemyng's Julius, who booms in singsong style from above a white gown, are dressed in grey jump-suits, like SAS men limbering up for an assault on the Visigoth embassy. This brings with it some incidental con-



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veniences (the conspirators can fade into the Roman crowd or lynch-mob, saving salaries) and some positive gains (a striking tableau after the murder, visually arresting battle scenes). But it isn't calculated to temper the monotony which the acting, itself generally energetic, direct and anonymous, constantly threatens to propagate. Perhaps it's unfair to compare an ad-hoc company with the RSC, especially when its director seems deliberately to be concentrating on plot, event, rather than the kind of psychological nuance in which they specialise at Stratford. For what it's worth, however, I suspect that only John Shrapnel's Brutus — rapt, breathless, contemplating himself with a blend of fear and uptight fascination — would be acceptable as a performance at the Memorial Theatre or Other Place.

At the ICA and the Theatre Upstairs there are, as coincidence would have it, two would-be archetypes from the American bestiary. *Quantrill* offers a sneak preview of the kind of gentleman who, with a slouch and a smile, hacks you to death and burns down your house for no apparent reason at all. Specifically, it involves a Civil War brigand who joins forces with the James brothers (yes, *those* Jameses), inveigles into his camp the girl population of prim Lawrence, kidnaps its sanctimonious mayor, plays the sort of pranks on him with which Dionysus destroyed Pentheus, and ends by sacking his township and slaughtering its male citizenry. David Schofield, the freak in Pomerance's *Elephant Man,* is the satanic Quantrill, and cannot be blamed if the considerable voltage he generates fails to illuminate the character as much as it ought. The piece as a whole is imaginatively bold, dramatically confused and confusing. Temperamentally, I incline towards wild woods rather than municipal gardens; but rarely have I come across a play that so cried out for secateurs to clip, trim, reshape, and (in short) fulfil its undeniable potential.

The trouble with *Seduced,* whose contribution to the moral reptile-house is a slightly camouflaged Howard Hughes, is subtler, more slippery. How to sustain dramatic momentum when the character can do little except sit about in his underpants, brandish his foul feet and mile-long fingernails, and mouth paranoiacally about this, that and the other? Sam Shepard introduces two slatterns, who desultorily strip, and a gun-toting factotum with a blood transfusion kit and an avaricious eye on the Hughes empire; but, in spite of passages generously demonstrating his gift for the grotesque, he doesn't altogether solve the problem. Too much is left to depend on the less-than-infinite energy and resource of Ian Macdiarmid, all shrill suspicion and decrepit panic as the maniac zillionaire.

No need to linger over Ryton's latest, a tale of vulturous mother-love given extra frisson by the fact that the emotional tyrant is Mrs Edward VII and her slave the Princess Victoria. Only a strong closing scene, in which two regal crones peck at one another in senile irritation, while their principal victim festers in the corner, redeems the not-very-original proceedings. It's more important to acknowledge the too-brief visit of Theatermanufaktur Berlin, a company with vigorous working-class sympathies and a calculatedly downbeat, even makeshift manner of performance.

Murietta, the tale of a mythic Chilean rebel, proved verbally somewhat bewildering to those, like myself, unable to understand either German or English as spoken from what sounded like an echo-chamber on the Moon. But the merits of the spare yet colourful visual effects and the expansive yet unpretentious acting were evident enough, and even more so in *Faustus,* when the simultaneous translation had anyway been restored to health. Eisler was an associate of Brecht, and his idea of selling one's soul is very different from Marlowe's or Goethe's. It consists of abandoning the oppressed peasantry and identifying with the nob class, here represented both by European princelings and, anachronistically enough, the slave-owners of evil Atlanta. Faustus is dispatched hellwards for conjuring with his social conscience, not with his magic books. The pretence is that all this is being performed by down-at-heel mummers: hence the tacky costumes and quirky musical instruments, the shabby cart that doubles as the doctor's study, and such visual invention as Charon paddling his canoe in the middle of a shaken blue cloth. But fake-naivety never degenerates into folksiness. The company's discipline and command of its style is absolute. And the result, if intellectually somewhat wanting, is theatrically unique.

Television

Julian Barnes

The World a Tease

Should one get steamed up about the Mitfords? Are they, with their characteristically English (and thoroughly publicised) passions for animals and nicknames and teases and each other, worth worrying about? The surviving sisters of *Nancy Mitford* (BBC-2) proved to be calm, serene-faced county women of the sort who, when a storm breaks over the village fete, when the guy-ropes snap and the marquee collapses, simply pull their souwesters further down over their eyes and carry on dispensing the quince jelly. These wonderful gels have been entertaining us (and especially middle-class reading circles) for years; isn't it a bit priggish to get worked up about them now? Perhaps; perhaps not.

Julian Jebb began his guilelessly grovelling portrait by describing the Mitfords as 'a very famous and extraordinary family'. They certainly have a safe niche in English social history as a typically whacky upper-class family renowned for good looks, 'rebelliousness', and getting their names in the papers. But they are perhaps more representatively upper-class than that. The only boy of the family was described by his own sister Nancy as 'a fearful old twister ... probably a fascist': of the girls, one dallied with Hitler (her childhood pets, included, appropriately enough, rats and snakes); one embraced both Mosley and his principles; one became a Duchess; one, Pamela Jackson, seemed thoroughly nice, if given to remarks like 'In those days it wasn't usual to travel third class' (love that *it*); one, the subject of this hagiography, became a mildly entertaining novelist (Jebb's fatuous opening claim that she was also a 'distinguished historical biographer' rather fell on its face when Jessica endorsed A.J.P. Taylor's view that Nancy simply Mitfordised history); and one became known as a left-wing rebel without losing her posh approach to things. In a recent article, for instance, this one (Jessica said she considered handing over to the Soviet Union the one-fifth of a Hebridean island she inherited in 1958 — 'I mean it would have been a jolly nice port for them, handy for the North Sea.' No doubt this was intended as another Mitford 'tease'; and what a comical tease it must have seemed, two years after Budapest.

Nancy Mitford unreflectingly laid out a range of characteristic upper-class attitudes: The Duchess of Devonshire: 'I can hardly read; I hate it, *books*'; Nancy: 'I enjoyed the war very much ... it was very lively in London'; Nancy again, of trying to live without servants: 'It just became a mound of underclothes and I didn't know what to do with it'; Lady Mosley (who is considered 'the intellectual' of the family), denying that either she or Sir Oswald was ever anti-Semitic: 'There was great disagreement with certain Jews over the question of war: we were very anti-war; and they were very pro-war'. Jonathan 'Razor Blade' Guinness was there to represent the younger generation, and read from his aunt's work. All of them effortlessly conveyed how easy and appealing was the retreat into the grand carelessness of money and fluting voices and fine stone houses. When Jessica spoke of their nursery belief in how 'the whole world became a sort of tea put on for our benefit', it seemed suddenly to define the whole world-view of a class which still (if less raucously) with us. I suggest Jebb's programme be repeated once a week on all channels until that truth becomes more widely disseminated.

A Sense of Place came up with a puzzling but utterly beautiful film on *The Fens* (BBC 1). It opened to a rustle of air and a lapping water, with a small boat slowly progressing down a lily-laden river; a long horizontal pole projected from it and was busily spraying the water with what looked like, well, water. The coals-to-Newcastle activity, whatever it might have been (gilding the lilies?), continued for a dozen seconds, without explanation; then the camera moved on. There was, we realized, to be no commentary; the odd gnarled voice came up on the soundtrack and said things like, 'Their forebears — they went and rough ed it in The Fen to get away from The System but that was all.

For the most part, surprisingly, the technique worked, and the view and sound of the damp, fierce, secret country came across well; only the occasional visual allusion indicating the strain of not having a link voice. When a box of wriggling river-snakes was unloaded from a boat, and the camera then cut to a cathedral, the mind couldn't help assuming a visual pun — the jump presumably being from eels to Ely. Still, the eye was happy, not to say bloated, by the end of the film, and the photography was deft and beguiling: stubble burning savagely against a dying evening sky, moletraps being set beside a misty canal, and then, a clip or so later, a line of dark mole corpses hanging on a strand of barbed wire fence shifting softly in the breeze like a tram's smalls. Perhaps this was *Penthouse* countryside, more beautiful than true; but I'll let the complaints, if any, to Fenland viewers.

My enquiry a fortnight ago as to the identity of 'Psycho' in the Cup Final banner 'I

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chcock is Dead but Psycho Plays On' has drawn the biggest postbag in the history of this column. Perhaps the offer of a Wilson for the correct (or at least most plausible) suggestion had something to do with it. William Beadle proposes that Bettega is the man (for his devilish foul on O'Leary) and claims to have spotted another banner reading 'Psycho-o-O'Leary'. Hmm. Lynn Yorke says 'it must refer to the eternal Irishman Pat Jennings'. Hmm to that too. Ian Mackenzie nominates Sammy Nelson, 'our very own, much-booked retaliation specialist' and claims 'a Wilson for a Nelson'. Two correspondents, however, agree on David Cross. Gregory Tesser refers to him being 'noted for his "robust" tackling', while Lisa McArdle of Leytonstone fofers an OED-style definition: '"Psycho" refers to David Cross who acquired the name at a League Cup replay at Southend. A large, clumsy man at the best of times, his frantic and unavailing forays after the ball (long after the ball, some would say) rendered him even more of a maniac on the loose than usual. Hence Psycho.' Unless I receive any seriously rebutting letters within the next week, the Wilson is on its way to you, Lisa.

Films

John Coleman

Gang Show

The Wanderers (X) *ABCs Shaftesbury Avenue, Bayswater, Fulham and Edgware Roads*
King of the Gypsies (AA) *Plaza 3*
Cinema Cinema (U) *Liberty, Edgware Road*
Hide in Plain Sight (A) *Ritz*
The Final Countdown (A) *Leicester Square Theatre*

This is one of those untidy weeks where no film is wholly recommendable but each has its moments. Philip Kaufman's *The Wanderers,* for instance, juggles themes and tones bewilderingly; there are so many songs and scraps of dancing that it would be no great surprise if it suddenly became a poor man's musical, a sort of 'West Side Anecdote'. The lads of the title are a Bronx street gang back in 1963 and such story as may be pursued has three of its members moving towards different fates: Richie (Ken Wahl) into a shotgun wedding with the impregnated daughter of a local mobster, his pals, runty Joey and big, dumb Perry, lighting out for San Francisco. Its director, who co-wrote the piece with Ruth Kaufman, has a wavering, sometimes beady eye on several main chances. Along the way, women weep as JFK is assassinated on shop-window TVs: on a last wistful wander before the cage of matrimony, Richie catches Bob Dylan in a folk club, giving out with 'The Times They Are a-Changin''. But any sense of a significant watershed is submerged under a series of unrelated episodes, a few very funny, some jarringly farcical, others downright ugly. A rival gang of evil-looking slobs, the Baldies ('like a bunch of pricks with ears,' says Joey from a fairly four-letter script), implausibly lose their early menace when they let themselves be drunkenly inducted into the Marines by a tough recruiting sergeant. The true, though highly *un*real, menace is then handed over to a vast spooky bunch known as the Ducky Boys, first seen knee-deep in swirling mist, later routed during a football match between the Wanderers and a team from a black gang. Here ethnic considerations are overridden by a common enemy: even the aloof Wongs, a select Chinese mob, come foot-choppingly into action, proving for all time that two whites don't make a Wong.

But the film is best furthest from the portentousness of *The Warriors.* A well-meaning teacher tries to bring the name-calling of his racially mixed class into the open, only to precipitate a threatened rumble which is softened into that ball-game by the intervention of grown-up gangsters. There is a neatly played game of strip poker, with Richie's girlfriend (gum-chewing Toni Kalem) raging as the boys' eyes pop at the second female's unmasked charms. And there is, above all, the enchanting, enigmatic presence of Karen Allen as the Other Girl, who temporarily has Richie in a fine lather. He meets her on the street while playing a kids' cop-a-feel game; she puts him calmly down, then smiles; inevitably, she's carrying a copy of *Lady Chatterley's Lover.* When Mr Kaufman learns to keep his thumb out of the viewer's eye, he could be on to something.

Frank Pierson's outrageous *King of the Gypies* is all moments. Your transatlantic Romany, on this evidence, is three parts diluted Mafia to one of Stephen Grappelli on jazzy violin. *Lavengro,* where art thou? The aggressively colourful cut-outs, swanning in and out of very large cars, lying, cheating, laughing, singing, dancing and killing, include preposterous old Sterling Hayden as big-hatted King Zharko (whose rights over New York and eastern Pennsylvania are disputed by some of the family), his no-good son Groffo, and Groffo's son Dave (handsomely null Eric Roberts) who attempts to opt out of his hell-bent heritage. 'The only reason I would be King is to lead the gypsies into the twentieth century,' he says, and there was I thinking they had it firmly by the balls already. High points are a courtroom scene where old Zharko beats his son's parking tickets down to a mere $3,000, cheered on by a crowd of kin; Shelley Winters *passim* as his massive, headscarfed Queen (but most glorious pouring his favourite booze into her old man's grave); and a lovely, sly, campy performance from Susan Sarandon as Dave's fortune-telling mother. If anything could redeem this fantastic folly — made two years ago — it would be the sequence where, *très grande dame,* she feeds a solitaire to Dave-as-toddler in a grand jeweller's, plumping him firmly on the potty back home.

Krishna Shah's *Cinema Cinema,* taking its departure point from the staggering statistics of the native Indian film industry (70 million paying customers a week, 550 new features made a year), ambitiously sets out to combine a potted history of this cinema — from its beginnings, through an unpopular handful of movies of social significance, to the Masala or 'curry' flicks and big-screen extravaganza of today — with a look at a 'typical' audience watching the resulting compilation. A Sunday queue forms at the Edward Theatre in Bombay, with ticket sharks hovering. A pair of young lowers, a *maquillé* gay, a taxi driver, a priest, a drunk, a middle-class couple with a squalling baby are among those who settle

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down to participate, delightedly recognising the four super-stars (2m., 2f.) who come on screen to announce different items. Frankly, although the American-trained director took three years to assemble his project, showing hundreds of films to 500-odd actors over a period of two months to get what he wanted, the outcome is tantalisingly confused. Only the skimpiest sense of a chronological development is conveyed; and the mixed reactions of the hand-picked 'audience' become pretty predictable (one thinks of what Tati made of an audience in his rich and little-seen *Circus*). There is one genuinely arousing musical sequence, it should be said, almost worth its weight in white elephants, when — led by the painted lad — the spectators start jumping and twirling in the aisles. As to the content of the average Indian movie, it strikes one that the industry's theme-song might well be 'Just Making Rupee'.

Hide in Plain Sight is James Caan's debut as a director/star, drawn from the true story of a divorced blue-collar worker in a tyre factory in Buffalo who loses his kids when his ex-wife marries a small-time informer and the new Witness Relocation Programme spirits the lot of them to safety, away from Mafia vengeance. It laconically follows this honest Thomas Hacklin as he fights the Justice Department, both legally and outside the law, to find where his children have been stashed. Caan's motives are surely laudable, but his impersonation of Hacklin seemed to me too gosh-mumbly and John Doe all-American to be other than an condescension. *The Final Countdown* spoils a good near-documentary about the workings of the USS Nimitz, the vast nuclear-powered aircraft carrier which recently figured in that Iranian cock-up, by grafting on a foolish time-warp yarn about Pearl Harbour.

Music

Andrew Clements

Missa Invisibilia

BBC Symphony Orchestra *Festival Hall/Radio 3*

When Rozhdestvensky's appointment as the BBC's chief conductor was announced, some of those who saw it as a signal of the corporation's desire to make its public concerts more accessible to the general concert-goer and to place less emphasis on contemporary music took comfort from the likelihood that it would also give us more opportunities to hear the work of contemporary Soviet composers. But so far Rozhdestvensky has proceeded cautiously; a symphony commissioned from Alfred Schnittke and given its premiere by the BBC Symphony Orchestra on April 23 is the only large-scale piece by a living Russian we have heard from him. Schnittke is, with Edison Denisov, the best known of the younger Soviets; he was born in 1934 (which makes him an exact contemporary of Maxwell Davies and Birtwistle) and spent his early life in Vienna, where his father wrote for a German-language Russian newspaper.

Schnittke's music, particularly a handful of chamber works, has cropped up increasingly frequently in London concert programmes in recent years, and it's become obvious that the problem of finding a consistent, truthful and acceptable style has been more central to him than it has to many of his fellows. A young Soviet composer must find the breadth of idiom among the Western avant garde bewildering on first acquaintance; at home the acceptable boundaries of his national music are defined by the profoundly conservative genius of Shostakovich on the one side, and the academic sterility of many of the members of the Composers Union on the other. But Schnittke has found it impossible to ignore the more radical of his European colleagues, and his response has made a virtue of the mixture of styles while attempting to reconcile them with more down-to-earth folk-inspired material. A few days before the first performance of the symphony, Radio 3 gave a useful introduction to his music with broadcasts of two works: his third violin concerto, which in its mix of tonal and atonal passages suggested Berg, and a piano quintet, where wisps of folksy tunes are bathed in clouds of close-packed chords. It could have been the work of two different composers.

The new symphony, Schnittke's second, follows the lines of the piano quintet rather than the concerto. The orchestral textures are frequently dense, slowly changing aggregates, after the manner of Ligeti or Lutoslawski, out of which emerge well-defined melodic shapes. But the symphony is not simply a study in articulating these sound masses. It carries the subtitle 'St Florian', after the monastery where Bruckner spent his early life and where he is buried. Schnittke suggests the symphony as a remembrance of his own visit to the monastery:

> We arrived at St Florian towards evening . . . it was an unforgettable impression — the cold, darkened Baroque church was filled with a mystical charge. Somewhere behind a wall a small choir was at evening mass — a 'missa invisibilia'. No one else was around, apart from the three of us, and after entering the church we separated, so that each could pursue his thoughts undisturbed and commune with the dark and powerful space surrounding us.

In the 'St Florian' Symphony, the 'missa invisibilia' becomes a choral background against which the orchestral argument is to be heard. The symphony is superimposed upon settings of the six sections of the Ordinary of the Mass; in each movement the choral mass is heard first, in simple unadorned lines leaning heavily on plainsong, and gradually gives way to the orchestra.

The scheme is worked out at some length — the BBC expected a piece lasting about half an hour, and eventually received something almost twice that long — and there are moments when the rate of progress seems irritatingly slow; when a Brucknerian timescale is apparently being attempted without the same wonderful control of enormous musical paragraphs and the unshakeable confidence in the rightness of its harmonic progression. The major weakness of Schnittke's writing in the symphony is its lack of rhythmic interest: the shape of themes (including some very corny fanfares in the *Gloria* movement) is too often predictable and the progress of the reiterated patterns (sounding occasionally like the Indian *talas* used by Messiaen) unimaginative. Moments when plainchant and symphony overlap — as when the trumpet picks up a choral fragment in the *Credo* — suddenly bring a new, more promising perspective, but they consistently fade before us and the anonymous clusters and ostinatos return, building to an entirely foreseeable climax. In the last resort the 'St Florian' Symphony grossly outstays its welcome, but it has moments, usually of the greatest restraint, when Schnittke reveals a positive identity and a poetic ability that with careful tending could produce music of permanent worth.

Weekend Competition

No 2619 **Set by B. Mooring**

How can one pick out a politician, and by what shall you know what sort? Extracts, please, from *The Observer's Book of Politicians* — up to 150 words (which may include several different breeds) by 13 June.

No 2616 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

With cuts everywhere, we thought you should reduce famous plays to 150 words of dialogue or less.

Report **By Toby Jugge**

A sin of omission: Dan Kavanagh forgot to mention last week that entries for No 2618 must be in by 6 June. So that's the end of *his* little career in Fleet Street. His chum Ms de Meaner has, rather foolishly I think, chosen this moment to go off on her hols. I shall say no more about this at present, but for some reason I keep remembering what happened to Milton Obote a few years ago when *he* thought he could swan off to Singapore.

The most striking feature of this week's comp was the confirmation it provided tha Greenwell is on absolutely corking form. The rest of you are looking sprightly too, and think we can safely award six quid for each winning entry. That should keep you in ice creams for a while.

King Lear

Goneril/ Regan. Pop's tops!
Lear: True, Cordelia?
Cordelia: Oh, *Dad.*
Lear: I banish you!
Kent: Gad!
Lear: Vanish!
Fool: Mad:
Believe me, these sisters
Deceive you.
Lear: The twisters!
Gloucester: And my boy's a bastard.
Edmund: Too bac
Edgar: I'm disguised. Tom's a fruitcake.
Lear: Me too
Goneril/ Regan: Prise those eyes out.
Gloucester: I'm blinded! Boo-hoo
Edmund: I fix my own odds.
Gloucester: The Gods are such sods.
Edgar: No they're not. Jump! All right?
Gloucester: And that's tru
Regan: My hubby's just snuffed it. To bed!
Edmund: My lady?
Goneril: He's mine!
Albany: You're still wed.
Lear: The law is an ass;
Forgive me, my lass.
Cordelia: Of course!
Regan: Ugh!
Goneril: Agh!
Edmund: Ooh!
Albany: They're all dead!
Good old gods! Three cheers!
Kent: I feel que
Lear: She's dead. Howl. Fool. Gurgle.
Albany: Oh de
Kent: He's dead, and I'm dying.
Edgar: It's time to start crying.
I'm king. That's your lot. Shed a tea

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Macbeth

Macduff: Hold it! Are you, perchance, one Macbeth, self-styled monarch of the glen, formerly thane of Glamis and Cawdor, what three witches put the evil eye on? Whose baby-battering spouse helped you chop King Duncan and blame his honest, law-abiding grooms, before she went potty herself? The one what put the frighteners on the royal princes, had you mate Banquo professionally rubbished, my wife and chickens rubbed right out, can't sleep, see woods moving, have a complex about paternal pregnancies, and waffle on and on and on about 'tomorrow'?
Macbeth: Yes.
Macduff: Right lad, you're for the high jump.

BILL GREENWELL

Murder in The Cathedral

Chorus:
Here let us stand, close to the audience
Explaining and partly explaining
So even the thickies will know what is happening,
And speaking in poetry
Which you will only recognise
Because we talk in these funny sing-song voices

Enter Thomas
All hail, beloved Archbishop.
Heis at peace with the King again
But not for long.
He is tempted to do various things
Or nothing at all.
He does neither.
Archbishops and plays in verse
Are equally incomprehensible.

Enter four knights
Watch out, Thomas. You're for the chop.
We hate to say we told you so,
But that's what we're here for.
Thomas:
Kill me, if you want to.
Knights:
Thanks very much.

They kill him
Thanks very much. Sorry about the mess!
Who'd work for a Royal?

They exit
Chorus:
Oh, woe, woe, woe.
Now we have got to scrub the Cathedral steps again.
And they were only done this morning.

A. BOTEMAN

Private Lives

Amanda: I'm on honeymoon.
Elyot: So am I.
Amanda: Quite a coincidence.
Elyot: We should never have got divorced.
Amanda: What's she like?
Elyot: I first met her in Norfolk.
Amanda: Very flat, Norfolk.
Elyot: Let's run away together and start all over again.
Amanda: How shameful. Very well, then.
Elyot: Happy?
Amanda: Ecstatically.
(They indulge in verbal jousting, which soon gives way to physical; the curtain falls on a virtuoso display of wife/husband battering).

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Tony Miles

Chess

No 182 **Another Prediction**

The last of the first round candidates' matches is over and the semifinal draw is complete. Korchnoy plays Polugaevski and Portisch plays Hübner. Hübner beat Aderjan as expected but only by 5½-4½, though the Hungarian won just one game. Portisch 'beat' Spassky, if that is the word, on a mysterious away-goals-count-double-type rule which came into and then out of, and apparently again into, operation at various times during the matches. The rule was brought in to prevent organisers, and more particularly sponsors, having to commit themselves to a limitless match, whilst not quite resorting to tossing a coin (which is arguably at least as reasonable). Portisch won the first game with black and indeed dominated the match but Spassky equalised in the ninth to force 'extra time' at 5-5. Two sets of two games were then played, all being drawn, so the tiebreaking rules came in, the first being 'he who wins most games with the black pieces wins!' This was sufficient to send Portisch through. Had that rule failed the next was 'he who equalises best wins' (!) which would have gone in favour of Spassky. Both rules border on the absurd/desperate.

Tal v Polugaevski was strange. Initially the match was postponed for a few weeks because of Tal's 'ill-health'. This was due, it seems, to his old liking for drink from which he was thought to have been cured for some years. In any event when play eventually started Polugaevski won the first game comfortably. In the second Tal produced a characteristic opening innovation, sacrificing a piece. But Polugaevski defended well. The ex-champion could have drawn but, understandably, wanted to equalise, went wrong and lost. In only a ten-game match this was virtually decisive. The next four games were drawn then Polugaevski extended his lead and won by the ridiculous margin 5½-2½. Clearly Tal was nowhere near his form of last year. Anyway, with him out of the way, I expect Korchnoy to beat Portisch in the final.

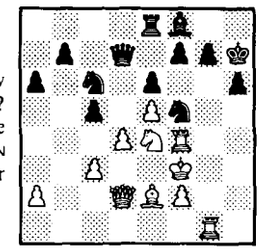
The crucial second game:-

White: M. Tal **Black: L. Polugaevski**

1.P-K4, P-QB4; 2.N-KB3, P-Q3; 3.P-Q4, PxP; 4.NxP, N-KB3; 5.N-QB3, P-QR3; 6.B-N5, P-K3; 7.P-B4, P-N4!? 8.P-K5, PxP; 9.PxP, Q-B2; 10.B-N5ch!? PxB; 11.PxN, Q-K4ch; 12.Q-K2, QxB; 13.KNxNP, R-R4; 14.PxP, BxP; 15.N-K4, Q-K4; 16.N(5)-Q6ch, K-K2; 17.O-O, P-B4; 18.QR-Q1, R-Q4; 19.Q-B4, RxR; 20.RxR, PxN; 21.NxBch, K-B2; 22.N-Q6ch, K-N3; 23.NxP, N-R3; 24.N-B2, N-B4; 25.P-QN4, N-R5; 26.N-N4, Q-B4; 27.N-K3, N-N7; 28.Q-R4, Q-K4; 29.Q-N4ch, K-R3; 30.R-K1?! B-B3; 31.P-N5, R-KB1; 32.P-N6, B-N4; 33.Q-N3, QxQ; 34.PxQ, K-N2; 35.N-N4, N-B5; 36.RxP, R-QN1, 37.R-QB6, NxP; 38.R-B7ch, K-N1; 39.P-B4, N-R5; 40.K-B2, R-N7ch; 41.K-B3, RxRP; 42.K-K4? (42.N-K5 should hold) **R-K7ch; 43.K-B5, B-K2; 44.N-B6ch, BxN; 45.KxB, N-N3; 46.P-N4, RxP; 47.K-N5, R-Q7; 48.P-B5, N-Q2; 49.P-B6, R-Q4ch; 50.K-R6, R-Q3ch; 51.K-N5, N-K4; 52.R-B8ch, K-N2; 53.R-B7ch, N-B2ch; 54.K-B5, P-R3; 55.K-K4, K-B3; 56.R-B8, R-Q8; 57.R-B8, R-Q3; 58.R-B8, N-N4ch; 59.K-K3, K-K2; 60.K-B4, N-B2; 61.K-N3, R-Q6ch; 62.K-N2, R-QB6; 63.R-B7ch, K-B3; 64.R-B8, N-K4; 65.P-B7, N-B2; 66.R-KN8, RxP** resigns.

Problem 182

White to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked no later than 11 June.

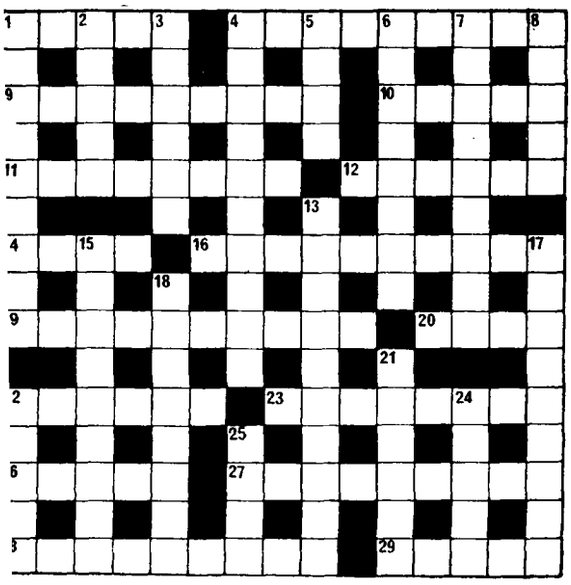


Correction to No 180

Apologies again! Gremlins transposed the colours in the diagrams so white pieces should have been balck and vice versa. The solution to No 180 will appear next week.

Weekend Crossword 1344

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1344, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 10 June.



ACROSS

1 Wonderful Scot holds most of his drink! (5).
4 Extreme steepness for a place on the coast (9).
9 Hear poems broadcast as means of communication (9).
10 'How now my — of India' (*Twelfth Night*) (5).
11 Highly regarded seed scattered and about to be prolific (8).
12 The young in the main fantasise reality (6).
14 Headless devils would become politicians (4).
16 Here is a girl in a car with a sign of injury (10).
19 In one's wildest dreams the college appears to be put in order (10).
20 Not new, kept in the house donkey's years (4).
22 One of these halfwits discovers nothing in the backward type (6).
23 Passionate bachelor, but keeps to the rails? (8).
26 'A bold spirit in a — breast' (*K.Richard II*) (5).
27 It works by water but is found in dry places (9).
28 They spoil the calm and may be less sharp (9).
29 Fish goes quietly as seamen come back and surround it (5).

DOWN

1 Fascinating business (9).
2 Compass for morning in channel (5).
3 One who catches a coin (6).
4 Is on the defensive and plays for time about there being nothing fresh (10).
5 Embraced by Sally, always would come apart (4).
6 Foreigner sees madness in a cricket score (8).
7 Charms in stage appearances (9).
8 Rent for a port (5).
13 They are temporarily in charge, thanks to the king intervening in their advancement (10).
15 Depiction of sunlight in a gateway (9).
17 During holiday bread is scattered for robin (9).
18 Saint with form of English disease (8).
21 There would be remedies for these evils if a shilling were removed (6).
22 The man for distance (5).
24 Town in mountain for royal family (5).
25 Pain is a revolutionary symbol (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1343

S	C	H	O	O	L	S		B	E	G	O	N	I	A
A		A		P		A		A		A		O		S
B	A	R	G	E		L	A	C	E	R	A	T	E	S
B		R		N	E		K		D		U		E	
A	C	O	R	N	S		A	N	D	E	R	S	E	N
T		W		E		D		U		N				T
H	A	I	L	S	T	O	R	M	S		A	C	T	S
		N		S		G		B		E		A		
R	A	G	E		A	G	R	E	E	M	E	N	T	S
E				G		E		R		I		T		E
N	O	B	B	L	E	R	S		A	G	N	A	T	E
E		A		O		B		S		R		B		K
W	A	T	E	R	F	A	L	L		A	R	I	S	E
E		O		I		N		A		N		L		R
D	E	N	M	A	R	K		P	O	T	T	E	R	S

Prizewinners to No 1343

Eduard Herzog (Switzerland)
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Further details from Gabriel Grace, Silverdale, 60 Sedgley Road West, Tipton, West Midlands, DY4 8AD.

AMERICAN ACADEMICS, with 2 small children, seek flat in London for Sept. '80-Sept. '81. Also interested in exchange. Write 'London', Box 220 Cambridge, Ma 02238, USA.

CANADIAN LAW PROFESSOR, 31, on sabbatical, sks furnished accom., for two. Central London area. 1 Aug-31 Dec. 1980. B. Reiter, Faculty of Law, U. of Toronto, 78 Queen's Park Cres., Toronto, Canada M5S 1A1.

SINGLE, responsible American LSE grad. student seeks reasonable London accommodation for mid-Sept. M. Chorich, 2710 Woodley P1., NW Washington, DC 20008, USA.

ACTRESS/SONGWRITER with four-year-old daughter, urgently requires 3 pleasant, spacious rooms in house or s/c. unfurnished flat, anywhere in London. Have £5,000 for fixtures and fittings or deposit, any offers? Tel. Jude Alderson 01-994 0023.

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AMERICAN, retired, active 70, 5' 4", educated, Jewish (non-practising), visiting London, home in Spain, seeks lady for friendship. Box 8438

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN, 40s, tired of affairs, seeks friendship instead. Classical music lover (any age), with four-wheeled transport, especially welcome. Box 8515.

IMPOSSIBLE HE sought by equally improbable she. Intellectual/human, well travelled/nature lover, unconventional/house-trained, attractive/non-dolly. Pt abroad (TEFL) but flexible. No phonies or xenophobes please. Box 8449.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, 29, Irish, wide interests; in London June, July. August, would like to meet lively lady for theatre, cinema, concerts, and sporting activities. Box 8547.

SINCERE BOHEMIAN WOMAN, young forties, surfacing from emotional hibernation, seeks male companion any age, interested in ideas, written/spoken word, Art; state of world; Week Ending humour. Nature lover. Needs affection like baby needs milk. Will happily share my rural home. Box 8577.

MATURE, to say the least, London woman wants to get on with life with companionship of unattached London gentleman (preferably widower) who also doesn't like life alone. Must have wholesome and stable personality and good character. Many interests, including drama and music, but interests need not be identical. Not too important, but could there possibly be a little dancing? Box 8579.

CONTINENTAL MAN (prof., early 50s, div.), recently settled nr Walton-on-Thames, wants to meet tall, attractive, independent, self-confident lady (up to 42), for an enjoyable relationship. Box 8582.

EARLY FORTIES WOMAN, tall, slim, feminine, sks benign, unpompous, highbrow masculine company. Unatt., London-based. Box 8580.

AFFLUENT MALE, 40, regular overseas London visitor, seeks sensuous female companion, any nationality, for sybaritic, uncomplicated relationship, theatre & poss. travel. Details & tel. Box 8578.

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE Royal Shakespeare Company. 836 6404. Recorded booking info 836 5332. cc 379 6233 (10-6, Sats 10-4). From 5 June low price prevs Dickens' 'The Life and Adventure of Nicholas Nickleby.' RSC also at The Piccadilly Theatre in Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman's 'Once in A Lifetime' and Pam Gems' 'Piaf'.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'Sisterly Feelings', 'Othello', 'The Browning Version/Harlequinade', 'When We Are Married', 'Early Days'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

Cinema

SCREEN ON THE HILL. 435 3366 (opp. Belsize Park Tube). *Derek Jarman's 'The Tempest'* (AA) 2.55, 5.05, 7.15, 9.25.

Meetings

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. Talk on Iran and Afghanistan Wed. 4 June, 7.30 p.m. 5 Tavistock Place, WC1. Everyone welcome. Tel. Simon Lesson 01-568 2207 for details.

ICA EVENTS, The Mall, SW1. 4 June 7.30 Towards A Nuclear Future Series — Walter Patterson on 'The Vulnerability of the Technology'; 5 June 1.00 Bernard MacLaverty discusses his first novel 'Lamb' with Frank Delaney. Tkts £1. 01-930 3647.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE: Sunday lectures on religion and philosophy. Enquiries: 06285 26464.

Annual conference of the Conference of Socialist Economists

'CAPITALIST OFFENSIVE — SOCIALIST RESISTANCE'
11-13 July Manchester Uni. Book: CSE, Dept. Sociology, Warwick Uni, Coventry.

ADLERIAN SOCIETY "Recognition Reflex" and other odds and ends' A talk by Tim Smithells, MA, M Phil with audience participation. Tuesday 3 June 7.30 p.m. Community Rooms, Millman St, (East Side), WC1. Refreshments from 7.15. Visitors welcome 50p. (Students 25p).

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, programme. Public Talk, Sun. 1 June 8 p.m. 'Mind In Nature and in Man'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION: Free Introductory Lectures weekly at 36 Craven Street, WC2; Enquiries: 839 5723. Also at Kensington Central Library every Monday 8pm.

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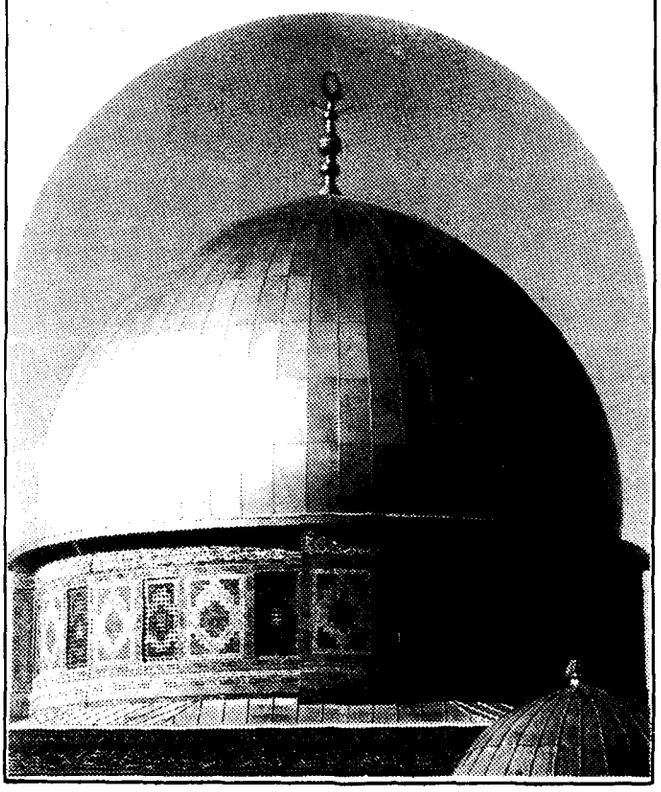

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